



## ACQUISITION RESEARCH PROGRAM SPONSORED REPORT SERIES

---

### **Qualification Requirement Perceptions of the United States Army Acquisition Workforce Since Implementation of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA)**

09 November 2013

**MAJ Michael D. Kaul, USA**

**CPT Brent J. Wilson, USA**

Thesis Advisors: Dr. Dina Shatnawi, Assistant Professor  
Dr. Marco DiRenzo, Assistant Professor

Graduate School of Business & Public Policy

**Naval Postgraduate School**

Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

Prepared for the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA 93943.



Report Documentation Page			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188		
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.					
1. REPORT DATE <b>09 NOV 2013</b>		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED <b>00-00-2013 to 00-00-2013</b>	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE <b>Qualification Requirement Perceptions of the United States Army Acquisition Workforce Since Implementation of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA)</b>			5a. CONTRACT NUMBER		
			5b. GRANT NUMBER		
			5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER		
6. AUTHOR(S)			5d. PROJECT NUMBER		
			5e. TASK NUMBER		
			5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER		
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) <b>Naval Postgraduate School, Graduate School of Business &amp; Public Policy, Monterey, CA, 93943</b>			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER		
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)			10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)		
			11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)		
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT <b>Approved for public release; distribution unlimited</b>					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT <b>This project's purpose is to assess perceptions within the U.S. Army of qualification requirements of Army acquisition professionals since the Department of Defense implemented policies to conform to the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act passed by Congress in November 1990. This project's objective is to analyze the acquisition workforce perceptions of training requirements instituted by the Defense Acquisition University for professional certification in the acquisition functional areas and to determine if these requirements are perceived as an adequate technical baseline of knowledge and experience that ensures that professionals will be more effective members of the acquisition Integrated Product Team. These perceptions were collected through visits to respective centers for excellence, from interviews, and from surveys of both military and civilian acquisition professionals. We acquired data from the U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center and the Defense Acquisition University, as well as surveys and interviews of acquisition leadership with a range of experience and positions.</b>					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT <b>Same as Report (SAR)</b>	18. NUMBER OF PAGES <b>175</b>	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT <b>unclassified</b>	b. ABSTRACT <b>unclassified</b>	c. THIS PAGE <b>unclassified</b>			

The research presented in this report was supported by the Acquisition Research Program of the Graduate School of Business & Public Policy at the Naval Postgraduate School.

To request defense acquisition research, to become a research sponsor, or to print additional copies of reports, please contact any of the staff listed on the Acquisition Research Program website ([www.acquisitionresearch.net](http://www.acquisitionresearch.net))



ACQUISITION RESEARCH PROGRAM  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS & PUBLIC POLICY  
NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

# Abstract

This project's purpose is to assess perceptions within the U.S. Army of qualification requirements of Army acquisition professionals since the Department of Defense implemented policies to conform to the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act passed by Congress in November 1990. This project's objective is to analyze the acquisition workforce perceptions of training requirements instituted by the Defense Acquisition University for professional certification in the acquisition functional areas and to determine if these requirements are perceived as an adequate technical baseline of knowledge and experience that ensures that professionals will be more effective members of the acquisition Integrated Product Team. These perceptions were collected through visits to respective centers for excellence, from interviews, and from surveys of both military and civilian acquisition professionals. We acquired data from the U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center and the Defense Acquisition University, as well as surveys and interviews of acquisition leadership with a range of experience and positions.

**Keywords:** acquisition workforce, perceptions, training, DAWIA, DAWIA certification, Defense Acquisition University (DAU), USAASC



THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



# Acknowledgments

We would like to thank our families for their continuous support and encouragement throughout this endeavor.

We also give much appreciation to all the senior leaders of the acquisition workforce who graciously donated their time during the interviews used in support of our research.

We would like to recognize the Acquisition Research Program, which provided travel funding and professional editors, ensuring that our project was successful.

Lastly, we would like to personally thank our advisors, Dr. Shatnawi and Dr. DiRenzo, for their untiring devotion and insightful guidance throughout the duration of our project.



THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



## About the Authors

**Major Michael D. Kaul** graduated from Florida State University in 1999 with a degree in political science. Serving prior as an enlisted intelligence analyst, he was commissioned as a signal corps officer and subsequently served in tactical and strategic communication assignments at Fort Hood, TX, and Seoul, South Korea, before assessing into the U.S. Army Acquisition Corps in 2006. His first acquisition assignment was as an information systems engineer and project leader on the Kuwait Area Transmission Systems (KATS) Project with the U.S. Army Information Systems Engineering command at Fort Huachuca, AZ. Follow-on acquisition assignments include assistant program manager (APM) for the Field Artillery's Profiler-Meteorological Measuring Set, and APM for U.S. Army Global Positioning Systems under the Program Executive Office for Intelligence, Electronic Warfare, and Sensors (PEO IEW&S). While deployed to Afghanistan in 2010–2011, Kaul served as liaison to CJTF-101 on Bagram Airfield, overseeing systems fielded by PEO IEW&S. From 2011–2012, he served as the executive officer to the PEO under PEO IEW&S. He is currently pursuing a master's degree in business administration focused on systems acquisition and has follow-on orders to the Pentagon as a Department of the Army systems coordinator (DASC).

**Captain Brent J. Wilson** graduated from Montana State University in 2001 with a Bachelor of Science degree in chemical engineering. Serving first as an enlisted field artillery crewmember as well as a military intelligence analyst, he was commissioned (from Officer Candidate School) in 2004 as a field artillery officer and subsequently served at Camps Stanley, Hovey, and Casey in the Republic of Korea; Fort Bragg, NC; and Camp Adder, Iraq, before assessing into the U.S. Army Acquisition Corps in 2012. He also holds a Master of Arts degree in management and leadership from Webster University, St. Louis, MO. Wilson is currently pursuing a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree focused in systems acquisition management and has follow-on orders to Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD, as an assistant program manager (PM) in PM Mid-tier Networking Vehicular Radio (MNVR) for Program Executive Office (PEO) Command, Control and Communications-Tactical (C3T).





THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK





## ACQUISITION RESEARCH PROGRAM SPONSORED REPORT SERIES

---

### **Qualification Requirement Perceptions of the United States Army Acquisition Workforce Since Implementation of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA)**

09 November 2013

**Major Michael D. Kaul, United States Army**

**Captain Brent J. Wilson, United States Army**

Thesis Advisors: Dr. Dina Shatnawi, Assistant Professor  
Dr. Marco DiRenzo, Assistant Professor

Graduate School of Business & Public Policy

**Naval Postgraduate School**

Disclaimer: The views represented in this report are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy position of the Navy, the Department of Defense, or the federal government.



THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



# Table of Contents

<b>I. Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
A. Perception and Certification.....	1
B. Recent Challenges to the Traditional Acquisition Process.....	2
<b>II. Background.....</b>	<b>5</b>
A. Literature Review .....	5
B. A History of DAWIA .....	10
C. Training & Certification .....	14
1. Career Acquisition Personnel and Position Management Information System .....	15
2. Army Acquisition Schools.....	17
3. Army Certification Goals .....	19
D. Challenges.....	21
<b>III. Research Methodology .....</b>	<b>25</b>
A. Introduction .....	25
B. Overview.....	25
C. Survey Development .....	25
1. Demographics.....	26
2. Basic Acquisition Experience .....	27
3. The Continuous Learning Point System.....	27
4. The Value of Acquisition Skill Sets.....	27
5. Acquisition Training and Education Requirements.....	28
6. Perceived Competence Among the Acquisition Workforce .....	28
7. Additional Qualification and Certification.....	29
D. Survey Deployment .....	30
E. Analytical Process .....	31
F. Summary .....	31
<b>IV. Results.....</b>	<b>33</b>
A. Introduction .....	33
B. Demographical Data .....	33



1. Acquisition Workforce Category Type .....	33
2. Gender .....	34
3. Year of Birth .....	34
4. Level of Education .....	35
<b>C. Basic Acquisition Experience.....</b>	<b>35</b>
1. Acquisition Experience.....	35
2. ACF Certifications .....	36
3. Level of Certification After First Two Years .....	36
4. Primary Acquisition Career Field.....	36
5. Acquisition Assignments .....	37
6. Prior Acquisition Experience .....	37
7. Acquisition Training Prior to First Assignment/Position .....	37
8. Non-Acquisition Assignments .....	37
9. Broadening Experiences .....	38
<b>D. Continuous Learning Point System.....</b>	<b>38</b>
1. Continuous Learning Points Requirement.....	38
2. Primary Source Towards Continuous Learning Points.....	38
3. Perceived Value of Continuous Learning Points .....	39
<b>E. Value of Acquisition Skill Sets.....</b>	<b>39</b>
1. Perceived Importance of Acquisition Skill Sets .....	39
<b>F. Acquisition Training and Education Training Requirements .....</b>	<b>40</b>
1. Source and Value of Initial Acquisition Training .....	40
2. Required DAU Certification Standards.....	43
3. Most Valuable Source of Knowledge .....	46
4. Value of Common Acquisition Functions.....	47
5. Value Placed on Certifications .....	50
6. Supervisor Flexible to Allow Certification During Work Hours.....	53
<b>G. Perceived Competence Among the Acquisition Workforce.....</b>	<b>53</b>
1. Perceptions of Team Deficiency .....	53
2. Perceptions of Individual Deficiency .....	57
<b>H. Additional Qualification and Certification .....</b>	<b>59</b>



1. Length of DAWIA Certification .....	59
<b>V. Conclusions, Recommendations, &amp; Areas for Further Research.....</b>	<b>61</b>
A. Conclusions .....	61
B. Recommendations .....	61
C. Areas for Further Research .....	62
<b>References .....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Appendix A. List of Interviewees.....</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Appendix B. Copy of Actual Survey.....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Appendix C. Respondent Remarks (Final Question) .....</b>	<b>99</b>



THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



## List of Figures

<b>Figure 1.</b>	Example of DAWIA Certification Likert-Scale Survey Question.....	29
<b>Figure 2.</b>	Example of Qualification and Certification Likert-Scale Survey Question .....	30
<b>Figure 3.</b>	Comparing the Value of Initial Entry-Level Training Held by DoD Civilian Employees vs. Military Service Members.....	42
<b>Figure 4.</b>	Comparing the Value of Initial Entry-Level Training Held by Contracting vs. PM ACFs .....	43
<b>Figure 5.</b>	Comparing the Value of DAU Certification Requirements Held by DoD Civilian Employees vs. Military Service Members.....	45
<b>Figure 6.</b>	Comparing the Value of DAU Certification Requirements Held by Contracting vs. PM ACFs .....	46
<b>Figure 7.</b>	Comparing the Value of Common Acquisition Functions Held by DoD Civilian Employees vs. Military Service Members.....	49
<b>Figure 8.</b>	Comparing the Value of Common Acquisition Functions Held by Contracting vs. PM ACFs .....	50
<b>Figure 9.</b>	Comparing the Value of Certification Levels Held by DoD Civilian Employees vs. Military Service Members .....	52
<b>Figure 10.</b>	Comparing the Value of Initial Entry-Level Training Held by Contracting vs. PM ACFs .....	53
<b>Figure 11.</b>	Comparing the Team Perceptions of Acquisition Workforce Behavior of DoD Civilian Employees vs. Military Service Members .....	55
<b>Figure 12.</b>	Comparing the Team Perceptions of Acquisition Workforce Behavior of Contracting vs. PM ACFs .....	56
<b>Figure 13.</b>	Comparing the Individual Perceptions of Acquisition Workforce Behavior of DoD Civilian Employees vs. Military Service Members ...	58
<b>Figure 14.</b>	Comparing the Individual Perceptions of Acquisition Workforce Behavior of Contracting vs. PM ACFs .....	59





THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



## List of Tables

<b>Table 1.</b>	Highest Level of Education .....	35
<b>Table 2.</b>	Perceived Value of Acquisition Skill Sets .....	40



THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



# List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AABC	Army Acquisition Basic Course
AACoE	Army Acquisition Center of Excellence
ACAT	Acquisition Category
ACF	Acquisition Career Field
ACS	Advanced Civil Schooling
AQS	Acquisition Qualification Standard
ASA(ALT)	Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology
AT&L	Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics
CAC	Common Access Card
CAMP	Career Acquisition Management Portal
CAP	Critical Acquisition Position
CAPPMIS	Career Acquisition Personnel and Position Management Information System
CLP	Continuous Learning Points
COE	Council on Occupational Education
COL	Colonel
CPT	Captain
DACM	Director of Acquisition Career Management
DAU	Defense Acquisition University
DAWIA	Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act
DoD	Department of Defense
FA51	Functional Area-51
FY	Fiscal Year
GS	General Schedule
IDP	Individual Development Plan
KSAO	Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, and Other Characteristics
LTC	Lieutenant Colonel



LTG	Lieutenant General
MAJ	Major
MAM	Material Acquisition Management Course
NCO	Noncommissioned Officer
NH	Business Management and Technical Management Professional
NPS	Naval Postgraduate School
OJT	On-the-Job Training
PEO	Program Executive Office(r)
PM	Program Manager or Program Management
PQS	Personnel Qualification Standards
RDT&E	Research, Development, Testing, and Evaluation
RIF	Reduction in Force
SES	Senior Executive Schedule
SRPE	Senior Rater Potential Evaluation
TWI	Training with Industry
UPTS	Unique Position Training Standards
USAASC	U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center
USD(AT&L)	Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics



# I. INTRODUCTION

## A. PERCEPTION AND CERTIFICATION

This research focuses on perceptions held by members of the United States Army acquisition workforce regarding the acquisition certification process, a result of the 1990 Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA). DAWIA was passed in response to the public's criticism of decades of waste by Pentagon procurement programs. Much of the fault for this waste was attributed to the incompetence of a federal workforce responsible for acquiring the military's newest technology and armaments. The act resulted in the creation of a certification process mandating that all military members and Department of Defense (DoD) civilians working in acquisition be educated and trained to a particular standard in their career fields.

Today, over 20 years have passed since the initial enactment of DAWIA. The law has been subsequently revised, including amendments in 2003, 2004, and 2006 to incorporate identified improvements. The efforts to structure and advance a professional acquisition corps has led to five college-level campuses, and official references such as the *Defense Acquisition Guidebook* and multiple professional publications, including the *Defense AT&L Magazine* and the *Defense Acquisition Review Journal*. Numerous courses are accessible to all acquisition workforce members, including online learning and professional conferences, with the objective of improving knowledge and tradecraft across the field.

The current acquisition workforce has grown to be exceptional and has benefited from years of progress through personnel advancements, proving the certification process. There is no doubt that standardized acquisition processes and resources are available to individual acquisition professionals, guiding them through the execution of their programs. However, the reality is that many programs still exceed projected costs or fail to meet the user's requirements. Some programs are so challenged that they are cancelled altogether. We conducted this research to explore the possibility that, as a whole, the acquisition workforce may perceive a deficiency in the Army acquisition certification process as a result of these continual challenges.

We are in no way suggesting that all issues with a program can be attributed to the DAWIA certification system. There are many explanations to justify any number of reasons why a program may underperform, such as insufficient funding resulting from budget cuts, immature technology, changing requirements and specifications, or when the need becomes obsolete. Our research examines only the perception of the Army's acquisition workforce regarding the certification process



and the success or shortcomings that employees attribute to training and experience.

The data we used for this research came from interviews and a survey we published and sent to all acquisition professionals working under the program executive offices (PEOs) within the U.S. Army. The survey questions are based around the individual respondents' perceptions on their own level of competence in technical acquisition knowledge and their perceived competence of their peers. Our intent is to identify a comprehensive attitude toward the entire DAWIA certification and qualification process as it applies to achieving the original goal of growing a better acquisition workforce. In other words, do acquisition employees feel that achieving the defined levels of certification has improved the overall knowledge and expertise of the workforce in order to be successful in this career field?

## **B. RECENT CHALLENGES TO THE TRADITIONAL ACQUISITION PROCESS**

During the course of this research, the U.S. Army has been fighting the war on Islamic insurgency (formerly known as the Global War on Terrorism) for 12 years. Because of an ever-changing environment and the constant adaptation of technology needed to defeat the enemy, the acquisition of the tools and resources required to advance our gains throughout the conflict have strained the standard processes used to obtain military equipment.

Major General Harold Greene, deputy for acquisition and systems management, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology (ASA[ALT]), stated in our interview,

We've gotten things to Soldiers faster through the use of quick reaction capabilities and overseas contingency operations funding. That isn't necessarily an efficient way to do business and you can cite many examples of things that were effective because we got them out there quickly and they met a need immediately on the battlefield, but I think the challenge that we're now facing is an efficiency one. If the metric is speed, then you don't necessarily try to be as cost efficient. You're going to try to get it fast and you'll pay a premium, and you'll accept lesser capabilities in the short term to get something there. Now we're going into a different environment and may not work as well, because we won't have the dollars to enable us to do that. (Greene, 2013)

In order to bring the latest technology advancements to the ground soldier in a timely manner, shortcuts in the traditional acquisition processes have been allowed in the form of the rapid acquisition process. Not only have procedures been streamlined, but the added availability of funding for overseas contingency operations reduced the level of risk in costs. The variable cost of research and development along with the price of procurement has always been an overarching



threat to program baselines. During the first decade of the Global War on Terrorism, if program managers (PMs) had a valid requirement from the field, they could brief the Pentagon and leave with all the money they needed. This shift from the traditional process has, in some cases, led to an unintended consequence for the acquisition workforce—a degradation of due diligence to the process.

The traditional acquisition processes that arose from the evolution of the DAWIA mandates are very structured. Generally, acquisition entails a lengthy development process beginning with an analysis of alternative solutions following an evolution of refocused requirements. Alternatively, the rapid acquisition process is primarily reserved for Acquisition Category II (ACAT II) programs with a specific contingency operation requirement. It requires only a quick assessment of alternatives and strives for limited product development if feasible. A 75% solution to the requirement has been acceptable. The intent is to get equipment to the field faster, and the system may or may not transition to a normal acquisition program of record.

The inherent risks of rapid acquisition stem from bypassing the exit criteria normally required to meet certain milestones for a program of record. Rapid fielding may forego operational tests, resulting in a solution that does not perform as planned. A short-term success may not meet longer-term needs. Most notable is inadequate sustainment planning, which can “result in requirements for multiple upgrades or for costly improvements. Once a piece of equipment has been rapidly acquired and fielded, the transition to a normal acquisition program may require backward development of required DoD 5000 and JCIDs documentation” (Farmer, 2012, p. 6).

Concerning rapid acquisition, the Honorable Heidi Shyu, ASA(ALT) and Army acquisition executive, said,

When you’re looking for something rapidly, you’re not developing technology. Technology already exists. All you’re doing is taking something pretty much off the shelf and integrating it together. Whatever you have you can cobble together, delivering it in one year, and that’s off the shelf stuff. It’s not newly developed. The positive aspect you have is that you can get something quickly to theater. The negative side is there is zero planning in terms of logistics. You’re completely relying upon contractors to support you. (Shyu, 2013)

While an urgent operational need requirement from the field is “a recognition that high operational risk dictates acceptance of higher acquisition risk to field effective solutions” (Farmer, 2012, p. 7), the rapid acquisition process has proved to be a double-edged sword. The acquisition community has been able to field equipment faster than ever, but at a cost to some of the younger members of its





workforce that have grown up in an environment that is accustomed to cutting corners. Major General Greene sums up the challenge by saying,

We need to reinvigorate our processes. I think we've lost a lot of talent over time as we've brought in a lot of younger people in the last few years, but we're going back to deliberate processes where we weren't as deliberate because we were reacting to needs in theater. As money gets tighter, as the demand signal from theater lessens, we're going to end up going right back to very deliberate processes, and I would tell you that processes to include risk, reliability analysis, integrated master schedule, and the foundational products from system engineering are areas we're going to have to work on. (Greene, 2013)



## **II. BACKGROUND**

### **A. LITERATURE REVIEW**

As we examined research on our topic, we found that data on employee perceptions of DAWIA training and certification have yet to be studied on a comprehensive scale. Although data exist from end-of-course feedback collected in short surveys after the completion of resident or online Defense Acquisition University (DAU) training, we did not find research that took a holistic view of the certification process in its entirety. In order to provide an initial reference to shape the background of this chapter, we focused our literature review on work regarding investment in human capital and the payoff realized by a workforce facing the challenges of budget constraints and ongoing retirements of its seasoned population.

In economics, capital assets can include the money in a personal savings account or privately held shares of a company's stock. On a corporate scale, capital may include an inventory of already-produced durable goods or any non-financial asset that is used in production of goods or services. However, tangible forms of capital are not the only type of capital. Education and training are also capital because they increase knowledge, improve earnings, or add to a person's skills and abilities over much of his or her lifetime. Therefore,

economists regard expenditures on education, training, medical care, and so on as investments in human capital. They are called human capital because people cannot be separated from their knowledge, skills, health, or values in the way they can be separated from their financial and physical assets. (Becker, 2008)

Human-capital theory is based on eighteenth-century economist Adam Smith's explanation of wage differentials. The costs of learning skills for a job are a very important component of net advantage and have led contemporary economists Becker and Mincer to claim that "other things being equal, personal incomes vary according to the amount of investment in human capital; that is, the education and training undertaken by individuals or groups of workers" (Marshall, 1998). A further expectation is that widespread investment in human capital creates in the labor force the skill base indispensable for economic growth.

Human capital arises out of any activity able to raise individual worker productivity. Education and training is often cited as the principal example of investment in human capital and is the primary focus of our research as well. In the commercial sector, an individual deciding to invest in his or her own human capital by going back to school involves both direct costs and possible costs in foregone



earnings. In this example, the person making the investment decision compares the attractiveness of an expected increase in future income in exchange for current training costs. In the government sector, an employee's option to invest in human capital improvements to further career goals is more advantageous. Funded training and education programs are offered and, in many cases, directed as a mandatory part of an employee's career time line.

The intention of investing in human capital is to improve on-the-job knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOs) that an employee must have to perform successfully in a job. According to the National Archives and Records Administration (1985),

KSAOs typically fall into two major categories— technical and behavioral. Technical KSAOs measure acquired knowledge and “hard” technical skills, e.g., knowledge of accounting principles or the ability to create and manage Microsoft Access databases. Behavioral KSAOs measure “soft” skills— the attitudes and approaches supervisors may take, such as the ability to collaborate on team projects or the ability to communicate orally with a broad range of individuals.

For this research, we identified 17 KSAOs that apply specifically to federal and military members of the acquisition workforce, ranging from cost analysis and risk management to people skills. (The KSAO listing can be found in question #21 of the survey on workforce perceptions in Chapter IV.) These KSAOs are included in one form or another as requirements to be met for certification within the 15 different functional areas under DAWIA certification for federal acquisition professionals. (The functional area listing can be found in question #11 of the survey on workforce perceptions in Chapter IV.) Program management and contracting are regarded as the two largest functional areas in acquisition. The skill sets applicable to these career fields relate directly to the management of billions of dollars annually in research, development, test and evaluation (RDT&E) and procurement costs. It is for this reason that human capital has been heavily invested in these areas since implementation of DAWIA. Pentagon spending is closely scrutinized by Congress, and the Acquisition Corps has realized the necessity in maintaining and improving the skill sets of those with the responsibility of making obligations with the taxpayers' dollars.

Intangible resources are difficult to change except over the long term. For example, while human resources may be mobile to some degree, their capabilities may not be valuable in every organization. Some capabilities are based on organization-specific knowledge, while others are valuable when integrated with additional individual capabilities and specific organizational resources that may not be mobile (Hitt, Biermant, Shimizu, & Kochhar, 2001). The DoD acquisition



workforce may be somewhat mobile, but current investment in human capital has intentionally taken this into account. The distance learning component of training provided by schools like the DAU encourages the adaptability of a mobile workforce to overcome what may seem challenging for commercial entities, but is regarded as second nature to the military.

Acquisition employees with education from certified institutions and who hold the most experience as technical experts or supervisors in an organization represent substantial human capital to the DoD. Professionals certified DAWIA Level III in their field or those holding multiple certifications across various fields bring to their organization the most human capital (through intellectual ability, articulable knowledge, and interagency contacts). As they progress up through the ranks, they continue to acquire knowledge—largely tacit and functional area-specific knowledge—while building social capital with their peers (Hitt et al., 2001). This human capital, in turn, should produce the highest quality execution of military acquisition programs and thereby contribute significantly to better cost, schedule, and performance.

In his book *Addressing the Human Capital Crisis in the Federal Government: A Knowledge Management Perspective*, Dr. Jay Liebowitz (2004) outlined how organizations like the federal government can develop an effective human capital strategy in dealing with the prospect that more than 50% of the government's workforce are close to, or are already at, the age of retirement. Many of those who will be eligible to retire have worked up to senior levels of management in their fields. As Liebowitz (2004) stated, "Human Capital is the collective value of intellect, knowledge and experience of those contributing to an organization's mission" (p. 2). A potential crisis for Army acquisitions is the loss of knowledge from these departing veterans.

Liebowitz's (2004) book examined the risks of losing human capital through attrition and how some organizations, including the DoD, are meeting the challenge. In the book, Liebowitz outlined his "four pillars" of a human capital strategy. These pillars include competency management (competencies/knowledge areas that an organization's workforce should know), performance management (how competencies can be transformed into performance), knowledge management (how institutional memory of the organization should be built before employees leave the government), and change management (looking from a cultural viewpoint to stimulate change in the organization; Liebowitz, 2004).

The two pillars most applicable to acquisition professionals' perceptions of competence and certification throughout the acquisition workforce are competency and knowledge management. Competency can be broken down into business management and professional attributes. Business management competencies are



related to common organization management practices and techniques, including organizational competencies that deal with the planning, evaluation, and understanding of the parameters and factors impacting the operation of an organization. Management must be competent to deal with daily operations and support of the organization, while marketing requires competencies to assess a customer's need and then to accommodate the customer by offering products or services to meet that need.

Professional competencies are basic interpersonal skills required to perform a job almost anywhere and in any field. Although Liebowitz (2004) listed four professional traits, two apply mainly to development within the acquisition workforce. Communications deals with concise and effective interactions between individuals as well as internal and external organizations (Liebowitz, 2004), but more important to the Army is leadership. A competent leader provides direction and guidance to others and facilitates the overall structure and teamwork in an organization. Program management in acquisitions can be substituted for the business management competencies, which naturally include the professional aspect of this pillar as well.

Knowledge management is a mechanism adopted by the DAU for building institutional memory of the workforce and helping transform it into a learning organization. By capturing knowledge and then sharing and applying it, knowledge becomes internalized, leading to new knowledge as a result of the application. In the creation of courses and modules to comply with training requirements for DAWIA certification, many objectives are achieved in the knowledge management process. When due diligence is given to the formulation of the training, the expertise of personnel is retained by capturing and sharing their best practices.

DAWIA helped standardize a process that the DAU implemented with a knowledge management process to improve human capital through training. The result of a certified workforce is its increased adaptability and agility as it learns to be responsive to the demands of the warfighter balanced with the demand of the taxpayer for fiscal responsibility. Creativity is fostered throughout the acquisition process as employees learn not to reinvent the wheel when the workforce can build on the expertise and ideas that fueled previous innovations. Most importantly to the Acquisition Corps, though, is the building upon institutional memory by providing this corporate training.

Liebowitz (2004) summarized that an identified set of competencies can be divided into three levels of proficiency. Following the same model that DAWIA has mandated for certification of the acquisition workforce, Liebowitz (2004) described the levels of proficiency as follows:



- Level I—Basic: General knowledge of terms, concepts, processes, and objectives of the competency;
- Level II—Intermediate: Apply the competency to perform common tasks; and
- Level III—Accomplished: Use the competency to perform complex tasks requiring creativity and judgment. (pp. 94–95)

These certification levels provide the framework for an individual's professional knowledge, from introduction through mastery of the requirements, to succeed in the many acquisition career fields.

The second work that we reviewed is “Diagnosing Key Drivers of Job Impact and Business Results Attributable to Training at the Defense Acquisition University” (Bontis, Hardy, & Mattox, 2011). The study was based on the data compiled from student surveys after the students’ completion of mandatory DAU courses from January 2008 to July 2009. Students provided input on perceived “course content, quality of faculty, and job applicability” (Bontis et al., 2011, p. 350). Bontis, Hardy, and Mattox also used data compiled in earlier research that consisted of over one million surveys assessing civilian-sector business training. The authors identified the earlier data as the baseline or benchmark and compared it with the data from DAU student surveys to assess DAU training modules. The researchers were able to establish a correlation between an increase in the students’ perspective of the quality of instructor, coursework material, and worth of instruction and that of their own individual learning.

The study was a very thorough examination of the coursework offered by the DAU. Bontis, Hardy, and Mattox (2011) evaluated 326,000 surveys submitted by DAU students over the course of 19 months. This sample size adds much credibility to the final assessment of the DAU training. The study not only measured the individuals’ perception of effectiveness and their retained knowledge immediately following the course of instruction, but it also assessed the course’s impact on actual business results 60 days after course completion. The paper was organized into a series of seven claims; however, the claims have been tested in previous studies and are widely accepted within the mathematical community. All claims were supported by sound reasoning and further reinforced by empirical data.

As researchers in the field, we assumed that as instructor effectiveness, coursework quality, and perceived worth increase, so does an individual’s learning. But as Bontis et al. (2011) mentioned, learning for the sake of learning is not the end, but only the means to an end (Newman, 1947). The “end” is more about job impact and actual business results. Bontis et al. were able to build that argument by





comparing a previous database (consisting of over a million data points) to the data acquired from DAU students. The work not only evaluated correlation but went further by modeling causation. The authors were able to trace the primary driving factors of the “end”—actual business results—and thus make implementable recommendations to the DAU that were proven to be root causes.

Both works, *Addressing the Human Capital Crisis in the Federal Government: A Knowledge Management Perspective* by Liebowitz (2004), and “Diagnosing Key Drivers of Job Impact and Business Results Attributable to Training at the Defense Acquisition University” by Bontis et al. (2011), were chosen for their relation to our current research. The government investment in human capital within the federal acquisition workforce is paramount to building upon the holistic knowledge accumulated by subject matter experts across all acquisition functional areas. Liebowitz (2004) laid out a foundation for a human capital strategy that has been embraced in part through the creation of today’s three-tiered DAWIA certification levels, while Bontis et al.’s (2011) research outlined a methodology that inspired the direction and scope of our own research, in regard to the perceived effectiveness of training toward certification.

## **B. A HISTORY OF DAWIA**

DAWIA was signed into law with the intent of improving the professional capabilities and increasing the technical competency of the acquisition workforce. Since the implementation of DAWIA in 1990, acquisition workforce training requirements have continually evolved. The current administration has called for improvements within the acquisition workforce primarily because of the DoD’s fiscal year (FY) 2009 \$384 billion budget, which is twice as much as was spent in FY2001 (Government Accountability Office [GAO], 2010).

Calls for improvements have come not only from senior leaders of the current administration but also from leadership within the acquisition community. Frank Kendall, the under secretary of defense for acquisition, technology, and logistics (USD[AT&L]), asserted,

I don’t think there is anything more important frankly to our outcomes than the professionalism of our workforce. ... Developing and making them more stronger and more capable of doing a better job is really number one in terms of my priorities. (as cited in Biesecker, 2012)

Since World War II, six congressional commissions have investigated problems surrounding military acquisitions. These commissions include two Hoover commissions in 1949 and 1955, the 1970 Fitzhugh Commission, the Commission on Government Procurement in 1972, the 1983 Grace Commission, the Packard Commission of 1986, and finally, a commission chaired by Congressman Nicholas



Mavroules in 1990. All of these committees recognized the need for proficient and qualified acquisition personnel from within both the civilian and military chain. The recommendations of every commission have paralleled those from outside experts for more than 40 years. The problem has always been with the application of these recommendations.

The question becomes, how do we implement the desired improvements to the acquisition workforce? What changes in the nature of training, education, and experience are required to stimulate improvements within the acquisition community? How will we know when we get it right? To answer these questions, we chose to conduct interviews with and administer surveys to key leaders within the acquisition community.

Today, the defense acquisition workforce includes more than 127,000 military and civilian personnel, as well as a large, but highly variable, number of contractors. The acquisition workforce is responsible for providing a wide range of acquisitions, technology, and logistics to support the nation's warfighters through the planning, design, development, testing, contracting, production, and disposal of systems, equipment, facilities, supplies, or services that are intended for use in support of military missions (Gates et al., 2009). The Army's acquisition workforce population comprises a total workforce of 40,000 military and civilians. Military personnel account for approximately 1,780 of these (Acquisition Management Branch, U.S. Army Human Resources Command, 2013).

The DoD defined *defense acquisition workforce* as

the personnel component of the acquisition system. The acquisition workforce includes permanent civilian employees and military members who occupy acquisition positions, who are members of an Acquisition Corps, or who are in acquisition development programs. (Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management Policy [ASD(FM&P)] & Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition [USD(A)], 1991, p. 20)

In the mid-1980s, the acquisition processes in the DoD were closely scrutinized following reports of the procurement of many items at unreasonably high costs; widely referenced examples were the \$100 hammers, \$999 pliers, and \$6,000 coffeemakers. Reviews were instigated within the DoD and from Congress, most notably by the Packard Commission during the Reagan administration. The perception at the time was that the defense acquisition workforce underperformed and was too large (Gates et al., 2009). As stories like the hammers made the press, the public's confidence in the Pentagon faltered and the public became more convinced that the military was acting irresponsibly with the taxpayers' money. Gates et al. (2009) noted that "Years of investigation and review of the performance





and qualifications of the Acquisition Workforce led to a need to pass legislation in the form of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) in 1990” (p. 2).

The primary purpose of the DAWIA legislation was to address the public’s concerns about workforce quality, in part by imposing requirements on the training of acquisition workers. Specifically,

DAWIA required the DoD to establish education and training standards (including creating the DAU, a key source of education for acquisition workers), as well as formal career paths for the acquisition workforce across all services. The DoD subsequently issued several instructions that addressed the improvements specified by DAWIA. (Gates et al., 2009, p. 2)

DAWIA was intended to address the competencies of the acquisition professional. In the past, attention by policy-makers had been focused on two elements of the defense acquisition system: the process and the structure. Laws were amended to tell those in the acquisition system which policies and procedures they should follow for procurement (Mavroules, 1991) while further amendments realigned the organizations that executed those policies. The DAWIA legislation provided a framework for a professional acquisition workforce by creating an acquisition corps within each of the military services and defense agencies. The line of reasoning was that more qualified people should make for a more efficient acquisition system (Mavroules, 1991).

In 1990, Representative Nicholas Mavroules (D–MA), chairman of the Subcommittee on Investigations, Committee on Armed Services for the U.S. House of Representatives, oversaw a study titled *The Quality and Professionalism of the Acquisition Workforce*. The report focused on four major questions aimed at identifying areas for improvement within the federal acquisition workforce.

1. “Are the services appointing program managers, deputy program managers, and contracting officers with the experience, education, and training required by law and regulation, and are program managers being retained in their positions the mandatory four years or until they complete a major milestone?” (Marvoules, 1991, p. 17).
2. “Is there a career program structure to develop qualified and professional acquisition personnel—both military and civilian?” (Marvoules, 1991, p. 17).
3. “Is there an appropriate mix of military and civilian personnel within the workforce?” (Marvoules, 1991, p. 17).



4. “What impediments must be overcome to develop a quality, professional work force?” (Mavroules, 1991, p. 17).

The report concluded that a comprehensive legislation was needed to ensure improvement in the quality of the individuals working in an acquisition profession within the DoD. DAWIA addressed this goal by establishing the framework for a certified career progression program for all defense acquisition personnel.

A recommendation of this committee included in the DAWIA legislation was the requirement that the secretary of defense establish minimum education, training, and experience requirements for all acquisition positions. Certain positions, such as contracting officers and members of the Acquisition Corps, now require a college degree. An Acquisition Corps member comes from the more senior levels of the acquisition workforce, GS-13 for civilians and O-4 level for military (Mavroules, 1991), and possesses substantial experience in the acquisition arena, which may include experience from the private sector. Both civilian and military comprehensive career programs were established for the acquisition workforce for all branches of the military and defense agencies.

Another recommendation included in DAWIA that has since been implemented stated that program managers (PMs) and other senior acquisition officials will be kept in their positions longer than in the past to provide greater continuity and accountability. It is now required of a PM to serve until the closest major milestone or to four years in the position. In 1984, Deputy Secretary of Defense David Packard (namesake of the Packard Commission) saw that no one had paid any attention to the very same “four years required” recommendation offered by the 1955 Hoover Commission; PMs were turning over far too rapidly. Too much turmoil at the top meant too much turmoil in the programs that cost billions of dollars. Packard ordered a standard tour of four years for PMs. However, once Packard left office, the four-year tour initiative lost any enforcement (Mavroules, 1991).

Although mandatory DoD training requirements for civilian contracting personnel date back to 1962, a 1984 DoD inspector general report found that, at the time, personnel had not completed 67% of the required contracting courses (Mavroules, 1991). By far the largest impact of DAWIA was the creation of the DAU to serve as the center for all resident/virtual acquisition education and training. DAU is responsible for all acquisition courses required for acquisition personnel, while also leading research on improving acquisition management practices.

DAWIA was amended significantly during FY2004 and FY2005. These amendments are referred to as DAWIA II and provide a number of flexibilities to enable the DoD to more effectively develop and manage its acquisition, technology,



and logistics (AT&L) workforce. One major update is that the once service-independent Acquisition Corps—Army, Navy, Air Force, and DoD (for other defense agencies and organizations)—is now an integrated, single Defense Acquisition Corps. Eligibility criteria for the Acquisition Corps is consistent across DoD Components, while procedures to execute the criteria will still be decentralized across the DoD Components (Defense Acquisition University [DAU], 2006).

Other changes in DAWIA II include an update to critical acquisition positions (CAPs). A subset of AT&L positions will be designated by the component acquisition executive based on the criticality of that position to the acquisition program, and the effort or function it supports. Changes in DAWIA in FY2005 eliminated the grade requirement for civilian CAPs, while the grade requirement for military positions still remains in DAWIA at the grade of 05. Now, consistent across DoD Components, all CAPs must be certified at Level III (DAU, 2006). The Continuous Learning Points (CLP) system also came about through DAWIA II. Initial emphasis was placed on the need for AT&L workforce members to remain current in their career fields by earning CLPs for any new competencies that are added to a career field after Level III certification has been achieved (DAU, 2006). In addition to the Level III stipulation, CLPs have been integrated by the Army into a further requirement for the accumulation of 80 points over a two-year period, regardless of individual certification level.

### **C. TRAINING & CERTIFICATION**

Currently, the acquisition workforce certifies individuals within three categories: education, experience, and training. Three attainable certification levels (I, II, III) are used for each of the 16 functional areas, or acquisition career fields (ACFs), within the DoD. For an individual to be selected for a particular position, he or she must be able to meet the Core Certification Standards within a certain window of time. For certain types of assignments (weapon systems, services, business management, etc.) and unique assignments (program manager, international acquisition) training requirements for the Core Plus Development Guide and the Unique Position Training Standards (UPTS) are offered through the DAU. The Core Plus Development Guide is the desired level of training, education, and experience, while the Core training must be completed within a given period.

The education criterion comprises civilian education (undergraduate and graduate levels) and differs by certification level. For Core Certification, there are no education requirements. The only education requirements are those found within the Core Plus Development Guide. There are other reasons why acquisition professionals may be required to complete higher level education. For instance, U.S. Army officers are required to have an undergraduate degree prior to promotion to Captain (O-3). Also, in order to earn Defense Acquisition Corps membership, a



member of the workforce must complete at least 12 hours of select college courses (10 U.S.C. § 1732, 2013).

The experience criterion is time served in a particular functional area, and the requirement increases with increasing certification level. Acquisition professionals are able to complete the experience requirements by serving in a position within the DoD acquisition workforce or other DoD or government positions, or while serving in private companies (10 U.S.C. § 1732, 2013). The experience requirement is an actual Core Certification requirement that must be completed prior to earning a certification level.

The training criterion is completed by select DAU training modules (both online and resident) based on the individual's ACF. These training modules can either be required or recommended, depending on the course. All modules within the Core Certification are required and must be completed to earn the desired certification level (I, II, or III). The modules within the Core Plus Developmental Guide are recommended and used for additional training, or as a precursor to the next certification level. The modules that fall under the UPTS must be completed after a given period following assignment to that unique position.

## **1. Career Acquisition Personnel and Position Management Information System**

In order to ensure that progress toward the requirements of DAWIA are tracked on an individual basis, the USD(AT&L) realized that a centralized certification tracking system would need to become institutional. While the baseline requirements of DAWIA need to be tracked, it is important to also ensure that professional development and career time lines are managed in order to grow a more robust and professional workforce.

The Career Acquisition Personnel and Position Management Information System (CAPP MIS) is a subset of the online Career Acquisition Management Portal (CAMP), which houses all of the U.S Army Acquisition Support Center's (USAASC's) applications available to the individual Army acquisition employee. These applications are accessible by a single login utilizing a Common Access Card (CAC). This secure site provides acquisition employees with the following tools to manage their certification and provides a road map of milestones for career progression.

The Individual Development Plan (IDP) is one of the most important tools available to track an individual's progression. The IDP is acquisition workforce members' vehicle to plan, coordinate, and manage their continuing education and training over a five-year period. It serves as the primary communication method to allow employees to discuss, plan, and gain approval from supervisors for their



continuing training and education plans (United States Army Acquisition Support Center [USAASC], 2013c).

The IDP also lists all of the CLPs acquired through acquisition training completed by an employee. The purpose of the CLP policy is to ensure that acquisition professionals develop and stay current in leadership and functional acquisition skills that augment the minimum education, training, and experience standards established for certification purposes within their acquisition career fields. As described in a policy by the USD(AT&L), “Professional improvement is a continuing cycle. It includes certification training and the full range of continuous learning activities” (DoD, 2005).

CLPs can be obtained through the completion of acquisition academic courses (15 points per semester hour), acquisition training courses/modules (one point per hour of instruction), and acquisition professional activities (i.e., professional exam/license/certificate, teaching/lecturing, and symposium/conference attendance [points vary]).

A two-year CLP cycle is standard for every Army acquisition workforce member. For the Army, this cycle begins October 1 of an even year and runs through September 30 of the following even year (e.g., October 1, 2012–September 30, 2014). The director of Acquisition Career Management (DACM) has set a goal for each acquisition employee to attain 95% of 40 CLPs by September 30, 2013, to achieve glide path towards the end of FY2014.

CAPPMIS also includes a link to the Senior Rater Potential Evaluation (SRPE) system, which allows senior raters to rate the leadership potential of acquisition civilians. CAPPMIS explains that the

Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) requires the best-qualified individuals, whether military or civilian to be selected for acquisition positions. By evaluating the potential of civilian employees, the SRPE provides a document that allows selection boards to more equitably compare a civilian candidate’s leadership potential with that of a military candidate as documented on the senior rater section of their Officer Evaluation Report (OER). (USAASC, 2013c)

The Certification Management System is an automated certification management system within CAPPMIS, replacing the manual certification process for the acquisition workforce. It provides the capability for a member to apply for a DAWIA certification and permits the designated certifying officials the ability to review applications online. It also provides supervisors the ability to better manage their employees’ certification compliance (USAASC, 2013c).

The final tool under CAPPMIS is the Army Acquisition Corps Management System, which replaces the manual process for the acquisition workforce. It provides





the capability to allow workforce members to apply for Corps membership and permits the designated regional reviewers the ability to review applications online. If workforce members are already Acquisition Corps members, then the workforce members have the ability to print a hard copy of their Acquisition Corps membership certificates under the “Print Certificate” link. Acquisition employees only see this option when they are eligible to apply and have received Corps member status (USAASC, 2013c).

## **2. Army Acquisition Schools**

### ***a. Defense Acquisition University***

All 150,000 members of the federal acquisition workforce have access to the DAU’s resident courses and more than 100 online e-training offerings. The DoD chartered the DAU in 1991 under Directive 5000.57 “to standardize the training courses and establish mechanisms that allowed for centralized equitable management of training funds for the DoD (AT&L) workforce” (DAU, 2013b). The DAU is an accredited institution by the Council on Occupational Education (COE).

The DAU offers over 2,000 courses to acquisition professionals, who collectively complete approximately 200,000 courses annually. The university employs more than 700 faculty and staff members and is located near major federal acquisition hubs. Its five regional campuses are located at Fort Belvoir, VA; Huntsville, AL; San Diego, CA; California, MD; and Kettering, OH. The DAU also has two colleges. The College of Contract Management is located at Fort Lee, VA, and the Defense Systems Management College is at Fort Belvoir, VA (DAU, 2013a).

### ***b. Army Acquisition Center of Excellence***

The Army Acquisition Center of Excellence (AACoE) was originally opened in 1985 in Fort Lee, VA, under the title of the Material Acquisition Management Course (MAM; USAASC, 2013a). As certification requirements grew as a result of DAWIA, the need for an expansion to the curriculum also led to a need for additional space for resident academic instruction. Relocated to the University of Alabama–Huntsville campus in Huntsville, AL, in 2005, and renamed the Army Acquisition Basic Course (AABC), the facility centralized Army institutional training, education, and career development courses for the AL&T workforce.

Re-established as the AACoE in 2011, the school serves as the centralized training, education, and career development school for Army acquisition officers, noncommissioned officers (NCOs), and Department of the Army civilians. Also in 2011, the Functional Area-51 (FA51) Intermediate Qualification Course for military officers relocated from the University of Texas to the AACoE.



In the early days, courses offered by the MAM and AABC were built around an emphasis on contracting, logistics, and program management. With the introduction of NCOs into the contracting career field, the school currently is recognized as the Acquisition Basic Qualification Course for an estimated 500 military officers and NCOs annually. The AACoE offers the following acquisition courses:

- Army Acquisition Foundation Course—three weeks
  - Army Intermediate Program Management—three weeks
  - Army Intermediate Contracting Course—four weeks
  - Army Basic Contracting Course—four weeks
  - Acquisition NCO Leadership Course—one week
  - Contracting Officers Representative Train the Trainer Course—one week
  - FA51 Intermediate Qualification Course—three weeks
  - Army Contracting Pre-Command Course—two weeks
- (USAASC, 2013a)

**c. *Naval Postgraduate School***

Army officers newly assessed into the Acquisition FA51 may also be selected to receive their initial acquisition training at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) located in Monterey, CA. Upon graduation, an officer leaves the school earning a defense-focused Master of Business Administration degree. These officers also complete all DAWIA training requirements up to Level III in either the program management or contracting career fields.

The NPS offers two acquisition-focused curricula sponsored by the Army's DACM and ASA(ALT). The 815—Acquisition and Contract Management curriculum and 816—Systems Acquisition Management curriculum are 18-month programs composed of six 12-week quarters, accounting for approximately 99–105 graduate credit hours. As explained in the 2013 NPS Course Catalog,

The Acquisition Management Curricula are designed to develop the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to effectively lead the acquisition workforce and efficiently manage the resources allocated to the acquisition process. The curricula focus on problem solving and decision-making in a variety of acquisition situations demanding critical thinking and a balanced approach in the application of theory and practical solutions. Graduates of the curricula are expected to assume



leadership positions in the acquisition workforce. (Naval Postgraduate School [NPS], 2013)

### **3. Army Certification Goals**

The Army's DACM is responsible, by law, for the education, training, and career progression of Department of the Army civilians and military acquisition workforce members. The DACM's implementation strategy includes high-quality education, training, and other career-broadening programs to enhance the AT&L workforce members' technical competencies and leadership skills (Deputy Director, Acquisition Career Management [DACM], 2010).

Under his three-and-a-half-year tenure at ASA(ALT), the current DACM, Lieutenant General (LTG) William Phillips has made DAWIA certification a top priority. His focus is on the Army Acquisition Corps' continuing to improve acquisition operations in every aspect and becoming a true "learning organization" with fully certified professionals (USAASC, 2013b). The DACM's goals are to improve the status of four key metrics that are used to measure certification of the workforce and to meet these goals by the end of FY2013. The metrics include the following:

1. certification by position within the allotted grace period (goal: 94%),
2. certification delinquencies rate (goal: reduce to 4.3%),
3. CLPs (goal: 95% attain 40 CLPs by the end of FY2013), and
4. failures or "no-shows" of resident DAU courses (goal: improve by 50%).

Five years ago, the Army had the lowest average DAWIA certification rate within the DoD. In 2013, the Army rates among the top. As part of the strategy to improve the workforce, holding commanders and first-line supervisors accountable for their people has been the cornerstone of the Army's success. The uncertified can no longer slide under the radar. Statistics are reported straight to the top. When an organization is faltering in its percentages, it can expect a call from the ASA(ALT) front office. Program executive officers (PEOs) are now directed to counsel employees who fail to become certified within the grace period. Leaders have overwhelmingly responded with "we'll get these folks certified or they're going to go off and do something else" (Phillips, 2013). In rare instances, uncertified employees have been asked to retire from federal service, but that is a last resort.

Army leadership takes the issue of uncertified employees seriously and works closely with the USAASC to ensure that the necessary resources are available to the acquisition workforce. Although the DoD is currently facing uncertainty as to future





budget constraints and their effects on training resources, a slip in the favorable levels achieved since collecting metrics would not be tolerated, if preventable.

**a. Acquisition Qualification Standard: Background**

DAWIA requires certification through education, experience, and training. The current DAWIA experience requirement is vaguely defined as general experience in a specified type of organization. There is no reference to position or duties, and it is only measured by time spent on the job. This doesn't guarantee that an individual is getting experiences needed for career development. In many cases, it's coincidental: One employee may gain valuable experience in one position while an employee in another position may miss out on opportunities for professional growth. The challenge to get the experience that the workforce requires has been taken up by the USAASC in a pilot program called the Acquisition Qualification Standard (AQS).

The AQS is modeled after the U.S. Navy's Personnel Qualification Standards (PQS) system, where on-the-job training, mentoring, and qualification are implemented. The Navy PQS supplements formal schoolhouse training with tailored standards that vary by functional area and tasks that are signed off once complete. Individuals must demonstrate knowledge and ability by answering questions posed by a certified qualifier and showing actual performance of the task to the qualifier's satisfaction (Naval Education and Training Command [NAVEDTRA], 2009).

Implementation of the Army AQS follows five guidelines intended to make the program a meaningful contribution toward the professional development of the acquisition workforce, rather than, as military officers have observed through their own experience, just another good idea that leads to an additional layer of bureaucracy in the certification process. The AQS is competency based, meaning it aligns with the three current DAWIA certification levels and validates experience by identifying minimum individual knowledge, skills, and abilities required. The AQS incorporates learning on the job by transitioning classroom training into real-world application with directed mentoring. The AQS is meant to measure proficiency by placing responsibility on a supervisor or subject matter expert to verify that individual line-item tasks have been satisfactorily performed. This leads to documenting the qualification. The USAASC's proposing that AQS becomes part of the DAWIA certification adds exactness to an experience, making the certification a more trustworthy representation of an individual's capability. Finally, the AQS leads to a "learning organization" in which mentoring is expected to be part of the assessment process and in which supervisors take ownership of the outcome of their subordinate's progression through the program (USAASC, 2011).



**b. Acquisition Qualification Standard: Pilot**

The USAASC's pilot AQS program was first evaluated by the Program Executive Office for Soldier Systems out of Fort Belvoir, VA, in 2012. The scope of the first pilot was applied to military acquisition officers and tracked their experiences within their current duty positions. The second pilot now being conducted by PEO Aviation in Huntsville, AL, has expanded the scope to include Department of the Army civilian employees and is expected to conclude by the end of 2013. In our interview with Rusty Weigle, the deputy for PEO Aviation, Weigle shared his view on the current pilot:

Some of this is common sense and some of it is seeing the big picture and not just being able to check a box. If we are doing our job right, even across this organization as good as I think it is, we are not doing as well as we could. If we are mentoring the people and sitting with them and telling them what we think they need—their strengths and weaknesses worked out, that is what this all is trying to do. It is very structured. (Weigle, 2013)

Current DAWIA education and training requirements place heavy emphasis on explicit knowledge—facts and rules.

Explicit knowledge emphasizes processes and procedures that are traceable to defined sources such as textbooks, policies, standards and guidelines. Tacit knowledge, on the other hand, helps to complete the skill set needed since it is the knowledge that cannot usually be taught and is best learned by doing. It includes perceptual, contextual workarounds and judgment. (USAASC, 2011)

Therefore, tacit knowledge is central to the AQS because of the emphasis on experience gained through on-the-job training.

**D. CHALLENGES**

One of the challenges that the acquisition workforce continually faces is the prospect of budget cuts that inevitably reduce the total workforce. Acquisition is a complex profession that requires years of growing acquisition professionals, yet public policy has prevented new hires in efforts to reduce the budget. This has a long-term impact, especially when combined with total Army drawdowns similar to the Persian Gulf drawdown in the mid-1990s. Not only are new professionals not hired, but more senior professionals are encouraged to retire early with the offering of an early retirement package. This brain drain forces the government to eventually hire expensive, qualified contractors in place of government employees to fill short-term capability gaps that may unexpectedly arise.

Another challenge includes the ever-evolving requirements of the acquisition workforce. For instance, no one could predict the need for the rapid procurement of



sophisticated improvised explosive device countermeasures. Clearly defining metrics would assist the acquisition workforce in relating its certification training to improved acquisition outcomes (GAO, 2010). While metrics used in government acquisition are similar to private-sector methods, they are dramatically different in other ways.

Technology is another obstacle faced by the acquisition workforce. Typically, defense acquisition programs are on the cutting edge of technology that has not even been developed, tested, or fielded yet. The end user, or warfighter, identifies a capability gap, and it is then the acquisition workforce's responsibility to fill that gap. Developing this technology is risky, and there is no guarantee that a cost-effective solution can be found. Failures can lead to costly overruns. According to Dacus (2012), "A potentially avoidable additional cost overrun of 40 percent through the procurement phase for a single 'typical' \$2.5 million Major Defense Acquisition Program (MDAP) results in \$1 billion in additional outlays" (p. 446).

In an *Army Times* article regarding future defense budgets, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel stated that decisions have not been made toward any program or force structure reduction, but he said, "it makes sense to take another look at the Army's force structure" (Bacon, 2013) as the service transitions onward after more than a decade of war. Secretary Hagel has said that budget cuts could come in one of two ways. One option would keep more troops but reduce capability. Providing capability to the warfighter is the primary mission of DoD acquisitions. This option would most likely lead to a reduction in numbers of the acquisition workforce as well, resulting in "a decade long modernization holiday, in which troops could find equipment and weapons less effective against more technologically advanced adversaries" (Bacon, 2013). Hagel went on to say that a second option would cut more soldiers to preserve high-end capabilities. "The Army would have well-trained and technologically dominant troops—but it would be able to go fewer places and do fewer things, and responding to multiple contingencies would be nearly impossible" (Bacon, 2013).

In either scenario, the Acquisition Corps will need to adapt and continue the momentum in improvement of skill sets through education and certification. LTG Phillips stated,

We have to continue to fund those courses that are critical for certification. We absolutely have to do that. As we have brought in the latest interns over the last three years, four years, and they're still out there seeking training, the last thing we want to do is reduce the ability for them to become trained. We absolutely have to do that. So training has to be a priority for the department through DAU and through the Army in terms of the training that we do. (Phillips, 2013)



The schoolhouse is already beginning to see the effects of cuts. In FY2014, the DAU expects travel funds for training to be reduced by at least 30%. Funding for Priority 1 (required training) students will only be provided at cost-effective locations. To offset this reduction because of travel restrictions, there is an effort to increase local onsite offerings to reduce the funding impact. The DAU also plans to invest more in video teleconferencing and Defense Connect Online avenues of providing courses, which will also reduce travel costs.



THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



### **III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, we explain how data was collected and analyzed to meet our objectives and answer the research questions discussed in Chapter I. We specifically discuss the survey design, details of the sample, and our analytical process. The objective of our research is to provide a qualitative analysis of the acquisition workforce's competency from the experience of individual members of the workforce, and also to assess how all members, collectively, perceive the level of institutional knowledge toward success across acquisition programs and productive collaboration within Integrated Product Teams. We analyze the collected data qualitatively to draw conclusions about the overall perception of the workforce in areas outlined by DAWIA, which was intended to improve the overall technical proficiency of the profession.

#### **B. OVERVIEW**

Our research methodology included developing a survey to collect empirical data to answer our research questions. We distributed the survey to a carefully selected population of the Army's acquisition workforce. We then analyzed the data to derive conclusions and recommendations.

#### **C. SURVEY DEVELOPMENT**

We developed a Web-based survey using the NPS-hosted survey tool, LimeSurvey. Initially, we intended to focus only on those who work in the program management functional area because of the all-encompassing nature of their work across the functional areas. However, with additional editing, we were able to produce a survey that applied to the entire workforce. We decided to broaden our scope in order to compare differing categories of the acquisition workforce, including those primarily in the contracting and program management acquisition career fields. After making several revisions and placing a greater focus on workforce perceptions, we were also able to make the survey more applicable to the entire acquisition workforce.

As part of the survey editing process, we first invited a number of NPS faculty members within the Graduate School of Business and Public Policy who teach defense acquisition-related courses to take our survey. Our intent was to gain their professional feedback and input on how to rephrase a question or to suggest additions that could provide a data set that would provide a representative picture of the acquisition community. We then distributed the survey as a pilot test to NPS students enrolled in the 816-Systems Acquisition and 815-Contract Acquisition



academic curricula. The distribution was limited to only those officers who had prior acquisition experience before coming to NPS. Our reasoning behind this decision was that officers without prior experience would not be able to provide a valid answer to questions about a certification program in which they had not yet participated. The purpose of this pilot test was to ensure the validity and cohesiveness of the survey in an effort to collect empirical data and provide a true measure of perceptions about competence within the acquisition workforce.

The survey focused on answering the following core research questions:

- What are individual perceptions regarding the technical proficiency of the overall acquisition workforce?
- How effective was the training implemented to certify proficiency across the Army's acquisition workforce in terms of meeting the objectives of DAWIA?

The objective of our core research questions was to explore how successful acquisition training has been in meeting the goals of DAWIA. The survey was intended to measure the level of competence at which the Army's acquisition workforce perceives itself. Further, by asking direct questions on the quality of training and then comparing these to the sources of training, we hope to offer the acquisition community a better understanding of how to shape training opportunities.

The survey was divided into the following seven subsections:

1. Demographics
2. Basic Acquisition Experience
3. The Continuous Learning Point (CLP) System
4. The Value of Acquisition Skill Sets
5. Acquisition Training and Education Requirements
6. Perceived Competence Among the Acquisition Workforce
7. Additional Qualification and Recertification

## **1. Demographics**

The demographic questions were included to differentiate results and determine trends across different areas of the acquisition workforce. This allowed us to distinguish between respondent groups such as military or civilian personnel, age, pay grade or rank, and academic education levels. The Army acquisition workforce is predominately a civilian population and is spread across 14 functional areas. Approximately 11% of the Army's acquisition workforce is uniformed personnel. However, every employee receives professional training and certification





from the same small pool of resources. The demographics provide a tool to distinguish between these limited numbers of resources and to determine who benefits more from them.

## **2. Basic Acquisition Experience**

The questions pertaining to the core acquisition experience of employees are an extension of the demographics, but they narrow the focus to the current status of an employee as a member of the acquisition workforce. In these questions, we asked individuals about their current certification levels by functional area, how long they've worked in the acquisition profession, and the functional area with which they most associate themselves (since an employee can be certified in multiple areas). The survey also asked if a respondent had taken acquisition training or held an acquisition position prior to officially joining the acquisition workforce. Individuals were asked about the number of different acquisition positions they had held prior to taking the survey.

## **3. The Continuous Learning Point System**

The next series of questions dealt with the CLP tracking system. CLPs are accumulated by such methods as completing DAU training modules or related academic courses, and by participating in training events such as conferences or other professional activities. Every member of the acquisition workforce must accumulate 80 CLPs over a two-year period. Because DAWIA certification does not expire, the CLP program was instituted as a means of encouraging the continual professional development of the acquisition employee. Questions in this section focused primarily on the sources from which employees achieved the majority of their CLP requirement and whether they realized a benefit considering the time invested. We also asked if the 80-CLP requirement had already been met.

## **4. The Value of Acquisition Skill Sets**

We placed questions regarding the value of listed acquisition skill sets at the top of the survey's subsection dealing with the "perception" of core competencies. We identified 18 skill sets that are deemed by the DAU as core to successful program management. We chose the program management functional area as the basis for this line of questioning because of its all-encompassing nature of skill sets across all 14 functional areas. We wanted to see which skills were perceived as the most important of the 18 and to uncover if there were skills not identified by the DAU that should be included in future training requirements. Responses were recorded on a Likert scale with the options of "very valuable," "valuable," "somewhat valuable," and "neutral." The scale for this particular question did not include options for negative values because we assumed that these skills must be regularly performed





throughout a program's life cycle. We wanted to know which skills take a predominant role in everyday operations.

## **5. Acquisition Training and Education Requirements**

A substantial section of the survey included questions regarding acquisition training and education requirements. Since material developed by the DAU is the primary source of training for the federal acquisition workforce, we wanted to better understand how the various sources of initial training compared in efficiency and effectiveness at providing knowledge and skills required across all functional areas. We asked which source of knowledge contributed the most toward the employees' success in their careers. The choice of responses included initial entry-level training, follow-on DAU training (online or resident courses), on-the-job experience, or other sources. For other sources, we provided a text box to write in what those sources were. We also asked about the sufficiency of training required within each DAWIA certification level toward the technical knowledge needed to perform successfully in a position specifying a certain certification level as a prerequisite.

## **6. Perceived Competence Among the Acquisition Workforce**

The heart of our research deals with perceptions. Using questions about perceived competence among the acquisition workforce, we looked at perceptions of the organization as well as respondents' self-confidence in their own competencies. We used a seven-option Likert scale to ask how perceived deficiencies (if any existed, as identified in a previous question) led to a decrease in an organization's collective job satisfaction, commitment, motivation, sense of competence, and perception of competence relative to those in the private sector. The scale ranged from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree," with the option of choosing "not applicable" if a perceived deficiency in the listed areas was not identified by the respondent.

We asked the same line of questions as they applied to the respondent's self-perceptions. The intent of this subsection was to answer our second core question: How effective was the training that was implemented to certify proficiency across the Army's acquisition workforce in terms of meeting the objectives of DAWIA? With these few questions (see Figure 1), it is possible to determine whether DAWIA certification is a true measure of the competence expected of the acquisition workforce, or whether the certified block is being checked prematurely. By analyzing these questions as queried against the various training sources, we have identified approaches to training that should be standardized across the workforce.



**[Q32] How much benefit/value would mandating a current/relevant experience Requirement for DAWIA recertification after a set number of years, contribute to the Collective Acquisition Workforce?**

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ Very valuable
- ☐ Valuable
- ☐ Somewhat valuable
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat not valuable
- ☐ Not valuable
- ☐ Complete waste of time

**Figure 1. Example of DAWIA Certification Likert-Scale Survey Question**

## **7. Additional Qualification and Certification**

The final subsection was conceptual and asked about the possible benefit from an additional “qualification” requirement or the mandating of recertification. The USAASC is exploring the possibility of implementing a standard qualification checklist to measure acquisition employees. This would be a system separate from DAWIA certification. The concept is that an employee would need to actually participate in certain acquisition events, as opposed to only learning about them through a training module. Ideally, this would better qualify an employee as an acquisition professional through experience. The result might be a better method for identifying people who have the potential to lead in a centrally selected position of higher responsibility.

Recertification was an idea presented to us in the pilot survey by Dr. William Fast of NPS, also a former faculty member at the DAU. For cases in which several years have passed since an individual last achieved a DAWIA certification level, the individual may need to recertify. Although DAWIA certifications never expire, we asked in our survey how long a certification should realistically be valid. The answer options ranged from one to seven years, with a text box for “other.”

Questions in this Qualification and Recertification subsection provided answer options that were scaled and presented in a combination of either a series of radio buttons or drop-down menus. This method captured the respondent’s level of agreement or disagreement on a symmetric “agree versus disagree” scale for the series of statements regarding this topic. For example, a question asked respondents to rate the following statement: “Defense Acquisition University (DAU) online training modules have been valuable toward success in my acquisition career.” The Likert-scale series of radio buttons provided the following options:



“strongly agree,” “agree,” “somewhat agree,” “somewhat disagree,” “disagree,” “strongly disagree,” or “not applicable,” as shown in Figure 2.

**[Q24] Defense Acquisition University (DAU) online training modules have been valuable toward success in my acquisition career.**

Please choose only one of the following:

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Not applicable

**Figure 2. Example of Qualification and Certification Likert-Scale Survey Question**

Finally, the survey included a final question soliciting any general comments that survey participants may wish to share regarding the topic of acquisition training and DAWIA certification. Chapter IV provides further detail of the survey and explains each question with our analysis of answers from respondents.

#### **D. SURVEY DEPLOYMENT**

This survey was administered to a sample that included only members from the U.S. Army acquisition workforce. This included commissioned military officers, NCOs, and Department of the Army civilian personnel. The sample was restricted to individuals who have met the DAWIA certification requirement mandated by their current positions. The sample included individuals working within all of the acquisition functional areas.

All branches of the military have their own authority over the acquisition workforce within their respective organizations and operate independently from one another. The Army’s acquisition workforce falls under the USAASC, which oversees training and human resource management. The USAASC manages more than 40,000 military and civilian members who are located across the United States as well as those assigned or deployed in foreign countries. The recruitment for this survey was sent to 127 NCOs between the rank of E6–E9; 1,334 commissioned officers between the rank of O4–O6; and 3,000 Department of the Army civilian personnel.



The USAASC provided invaluable assistance in coordinating the distribution of our survey to the Army's acquisition workforce as allowed per DoD Instruction 1100.13 (*Surveys of DoD Personnel*; Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management Policy (ASD[FM&P]), 1996) and Army Regulation 600–46 (*Attitude and Opinion Survey Program*; Army Publishing Directorate [APD], 1979). These regulations pertain to surveys conducted among Army personnel (military and civilian), including Army National Guard, U.S. Army Reserve, and Army retirees. We announced the survey to the workforce through an e-mail with a link to our LimeSurvey website. We sent a follow-up reminder e-mail two weeks after the initial invitation. Additionally, the survey link was provided in an advertisement in the online publication of USAASC's *Acquisition, Logistics, & Technology* magazine. The survey was available for 30 days, starting July 1, 2013.

#### **E. ANALYTICAL PROCESS**

We analyzed and reported the average of the Likert-scale responses as well as all other types of responses for each question. Our first step was to take a broad view of the responses independent of one another. We then conducted further analysis by querying various demographics and taking assorted acquisition experience into account. The results assisted in detecting trends and identifying correlations across the sample workforce population.

#### **F. SUMMARY**

In Chapter III, we identified the Army acquisition organization that we surveyed, our method of creating the survey, and our reasoning for formulating the questions. We also discussed the collection of and intent for further analyzing the data. In Chapter IV, we present the results of the data and analyze the findings. In Chapter V, we draw our conclusions and offer recommendations for further research.



THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



## **IV. RESULTS**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, we discuss the results of our survey and interviews. We received 1,229 total responses to the survey; 1,073 of the respondents completed the entire questionnaire; and 1,059 respondents indicated consent to the voluntary survey. We estimate that the survey was sent to 4,000 Department of the Army acquisition civilians and 1,461 acquisition soldiers (127 NCOs and 1,334 commissioned officers). Assuming that all targeted individuals received the solicitation from the USAASC, our response rate for the complete survey was 19.4%. In addition to the electronic survey, we also conducted personal interviews with senior leaders of the Army Acquisition Corps from July 15, 2013, to July 19, 2013. Our interviewee list is contained in Appendix A and includes 10 separate interviews in Washington, DC; Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD; and Huntsville, AL. We mention the primary points of discussion for the interviews throughout the paper. A copy of the actual survey used through the LimeSurvey program is contained in Appendix B, and a listing (broken down by ACFs) of the remarks from the final question is included in Appendix C.

### **B. DEMOGRAPHICAL DATA**

In this section, we report the 23 administrative questions included in the survey. This data is broken down by specific categories, and the overall results are presented with further analysis, including our initial expectations.

#### **1. Acquisition Workforce Category Type**

Since there is a dramatic difference in career paths between acquisition U.S. Army service members and their DoD civilian employee counterparts, this question served to differentiate the two. Of the 1,059 complete responses, 720 (68%) of the respondents indicated that they were DoD civilian employees and 339 (32%) of the respondents reported that they were U.S. Army service members. The actual acquisition workforce for the Department of the Army has only approximately 4.5% U.S. Army service members, as reported in Chapter II.

We then administered two sub-questions to the U.S. Army service members to further delineate their administrative data. The first question asked for the respondent's rank. The List of Acronyms (p. xv) in the introduction contains a list of common abbreviations for the ranks of service members. The sample population consisted of 40.7% majors (MAJs), 37.8% lieutenant colonels (LTCs), 12.4% colonels (COLs), 2.6% captains (CPTs), and less than 6.5% NCOs. This sample of respondents is an accurate distribution of the acquisition workforce itself. There are



relatively few enlisted members in the acquisition workforce because primarily the only ACF open to them is in contracting.

The second question asked for the year of commission for commissioned officers and the year of enlistment for NCOs. Within the sampled respondents, the downsizing implemented within the acquisition community during the early 1990s is reflected in the data. The number of respondents that entered into the U.S. Army prior to 1989 was 13.6%, from 1990–1992 was 9.8%, and between both 1993–1995 and 1996–1998 was 22.2%. This drop (down to 9.8%) was a result of the reduction in force (RIF) implemented following Operation Desert Storm (first Persian Gulf War, 1990–1991).

The DoD civilian employees were instead asked their current pay grades. DoD civilian employee pay grades are broken down into a general schedule (GS) from 1 to 15. Each GS level has an associated step (1–10) that is normally increased based on performance and time served. For the purposes of this survey, we evaluated only the GS base levels (1–15) because those levels more distinctly have a military rank correspondence than the individual steps. Other scales commonly used include the Business Management and Technical Management Professional (NH) scale, which corresponds to a range of GS scales; for example: NH-03 is a band of pay schedule encompassing GS-12 and GS-13. The senior executive schedule (SES) employees are the civilian general officer equivalent. For the purposes of this survey, SES employees typically hold positions as PEOs within the acquisition community. There were 49.4% of respondents that reported as holding a GS-14 through GS-15, or NH-04 position, and just less than 47% of the respondents indicated serving as a GS-12 through GS-13, or NH-03 position. This distribution of pay grades appears abnormally high, but it is accurate when considering the nature of the acquisition community that consists of many more technical employees that hold the GS-12 through GS-15 position than typical public agencies.

## **2. Gender**

Question 3 asked for the respondent's gender. Of the 1,059 complete responses, 76.3% were male and 23.6% were female. One respondent chose the option of "not applicable." The DoD civilian workforce was composed of 69.9% male and 30.1% female members. The U.S. Army service members were composed of 89.9% male and 10.1% female. This percentage of male and female is expected, as it closely mirrors the U.S. Army active service as a whole.

## **3. Year of Birth**

Question 4 asked the respondents to submit their year of birth. The mean year of birth was 1964.8 (standard deviation,  $s = 8.917$ ), the median was 1965, and





the mode was 1964. The majority of our respondents entered the employment years somewhere between 1982 and 1986, depending on attendance of higher level education, and is still a decade and a half away from retirement. The collection of data was closely similar to a bell curve of a normal distribution.

#### **4. Level of Education**

The next question asked respondents to provide their highest levels of education prior to their first acquisition assignments. The survey offered eight possible responses. For analysis purposes, we combined partial work towards a degree into the next lower degree type, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. Highest Level of Education**

<b>Degree Type</b>	<b>Observations</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
PhD	12	1.1%
Master's Degree	425	40.1%
BS / BA	504	47.6%
Associates Degree	43	4.1%
High School Diploma	73	6.9%
N/A	2	0.2%

Overwhelmingly, the majority of respondents earned a BS/BA or master's degree prior to an acquisition assignment. We felt that this information was important because respondents' past educational accomplishments may purport a higher level of support toward the certification process.

As a follow-on question, those that had earned a bachelor's degree or higher (941 observations) were surveyed regarding the field in which they received their degrees. Of those that responded, 70.1% possessed a degree in either a curriculum of business/economics or engineering/engineering technology.

### **C. BASIC ACQUISITION EXPERIENCE**

#### **1. Acquisition Experience**

Our survey requested that individuals provide the year in which they began their first acquisition-related assignment or position. From this data, we were able to collect the number of years that respondents spent serving within the community and relate that to any certification trends. Similar to previous questions, that data showed a decrease in the number of employees hired into the acquisition community immediately following the RIF in the early 1990s. Over 60% of respondents had fewer than 13 years of government acquisition experience. Personnel that have worked 14–17 years consisted of 11.6% of the survey population, those with 18–21





years of experience consisted of 6.4% of the population, and those with between 22–25 years of experience consisted of 7.6% of the population.

## **2. ACF Certifications**

The survey questioned which certifications the individual has earned in the 16 different acquisition career fields. The acquisition career fields of auditing, facilities engineering, industrial and contract property management, and purchasing all had fewer than 15 certification responses. The primary population of our survey, Level III certified in program management, was nearly 46% of the overall population. Level II certified in program management was the next most populous ACF (16.1%), followed by Level III in contracting (12.5%). Of the total population, some 73.9% of respondents reported some level of PM certification. The next most populous ACF was contracting, in which 22.9% of the sample population reported some level of certification.

## **3. Level of Certification After First Two Years**

Our survey questioned how respondents' levels of certification were earned after the first two years of certification. It is the current policy within the U.S. Army acquisition workforce that personnel achieve a level of certification equal to the required certification for the hired position. This grace period of two years allows time for individuals to either increase their current levels of certification or achieve the baseline criteria for new hires. Military service members were more likely to achieve at least a Level II certification after two years (62.1%) than their DoD civilian employee counterparts (only 39.1%). This may be due in part to the formalized entry-level training that military service members receive. The entry-level training does count towards certification in the varying ACFs.

## **4. Primary Acquisition Career Field**

Our survey asked which ACF the respondents most identify with. Ideally, the respondents would reply with the acquisition career field in which they have the most experience, or with the one that they intend on making a long-term professional commitment towards. The acquisition career fields of auditing, facilities engineering, industrial and contract property management, purchasing, and science and technology management all had fewer than four responses. Program management consisted of 50.1% of the responses. Contracting was the ACF chosen by 16.0% of the respondents, followed by business/financial management reported by 8.6% of the sample population. This is an accurate depiction of the targeted group of acquisition workforce members because the USAASC e-mailed the survey link directly to the PEOs, which predominately consist of PM employees.



## **5. Acquisition Assignments**

The survey asked for respondents to provide the number of acquisition assignments that they have held. The mean was approximately four assignments ( $s = 2.8$ ) for the sample population. This figure shows that the sample population has had multiple acquisition experiences because most assignments typically last, on average, two years.

## **6. Prior Acquisition Experience**

The survey asked whether individuals had gained experience working in acquisition prior to their first acquisition assignments. Primarily, respondents cited that their experiences, if any, were attained through positions with private companies or with prior military experience that was not acquisition-related. Of those that responded, 69.7% had no acquisition experience prior to their first assignments.

## **7. Acquisition Training Prior to First Assignment/Position**

The next question surveyed whether individuals had taken any DAU courses prior to their first assignment. Over two thirds (66.0%) had not taken any type of courses prior to their first assignments. Many of the respondents replied that the training they received was the initial training course, and not preparatory training for an assignment. Of those who had actually taken courses in preparation for an assignment, respondents cited personal improvement just slightly more frequently than requirements for other, non-acquisition positions. Prior acquisition training is not common with military service members because after members are assessed into the acquisition community, they receive orders to attend their initial entry-level training shortly thereafter.

## **8. Non-Acquisition Assignments**

The survey requested information regarding whether the workforce members had served in an assignment that did not count towards DAWIA certification. Approximately 14.1% of the respondents indicated that they had held assignments that did not count towards certification. Of this, civilian members made up 59.7% of those serving in non-certifying positions. Ideally, once specialized into the acquisition workforce, professionals would continually serve in acquisition-related assignments that are coded to earn DAWIA certification and thus gain valuable experience. Further analysis of acquisition assignments should be conducted across the board in determining why these positions are not being counted towards DAWIA certified time.



## **9. Broadening Experiences**

This question requested information involving broadening experiences. Nearly 46% of the respondents indicated that they had participated in a broadening experience, which included advanced civil schooling (19.2%), training with industry (5.1%), active membership in the Program Management Institute (4.8%), a developmental assignment (19.1%), or other opportunities (13.5%). Many of the respondents' other opportunities were variations of attaining higher level education as well as assignments to key strategic areas, such as the Pentagon.

## **D. CONTINUOUS LEARNING POINT SYSTEM**

### **1. Continuous Learning Points Requirement**

The next question asked the respondents to self-report how often they achieved the required 80 CLPs in every two-year period, as required by DAWIA. Over 91% reported that they have always earned the points since joining the acquisition workforce. Less than 10% of military service members reported that they had not achieved the requirement, compared to only 7% of civilian workers not achieving the mark. Of those acquisition workforce members who reported not achieving the 80 required CLPs, 54.8% reported that they had not completed the requirement 50% or more of the time. Achieving the CLP requirement is generally considered a leadership issue based on the interviews that we conducted. Generally, the interviewees indicated that they felt that acquisition workforce employees who were assigned a command that emphasized and intermittently gauged completion would more likely comply.

### **2. Primary Source Towards Continuous Learning Points**

The survey questioned how the acquisition workforce members primarily earned points towards the previous 80 CLP requirement. The majority of the respondents replied that they had earned the points most often through completion of DAU training courses or modules (64.9%). Academic course was the next most populous response (20.1%), followed by professional activities (8.1%). This data is close to what we expected because DAU training courses/modules (especially online modules) are readily available to the acquisition workforce, are easily completed during normal work hours (i.e., the employee is still able to complete normal duties), and do not cost the organization money to enroll. Academic courses are not always unit/organization funded, are sometimes not available in the immediate area, and are not easily completed during normal duty hours without degraded completion of work.



### **3. Perceived Value of Continuous Learning Points**

This question requested the perceived value that the acquisition workforce members placed on the CLP requirement, as shown in Figure 11. Overall, less than 9% respondents found this requirement “very valuable.” There were slightly more military service members (62.1%) who reported that the requirement was of value than DoD civilian employees (55.7%). Over a quarter of the respondents (25.9%) reported CLPs of low or no value. The more senior acquisition workforce members (Level III certified) within this survey may have the perception that the CLP does not further employee careers once Level III is achieved in the ACF. Should CLP completion be incentivized by promotion of additional steps (on the GS scale) or other non-monetary awards, perceived value and compliance rates may increase.

## **E. VALUE OF ACQUISITION SKILL SETS**

### **1. Perceived Importance of Acquisition Skill Sets**

The next question asked for the perceived importance of common business-related skill sets often required in the acquisition process and taught throughout offered acquisition courses. The data showed that there is a general consensus of the selected skill sets’ worth. Table 2 shows the data results. The last column combines responses of “somewhat valuable,” “valuable,” and “very valuable.” The sample acquisition workforce population most valued people skills and contracting skill sets. Depot operations and Lean Six Sigma were the least valued of the 18 categories.



**Table 2. Perceived Value of Acquisition Skill Sets**

<b>Acquisition Skillset</b>	<b>Percentage Valued</b>
People Skills	<b>93.9%</b>
Contracting (Planning, Execution, and Management)	<b>92.6%</b>
Statement of Work	91.7%
Program Management Tools	90.8%
Risk Management	89.2%
Financial Management	87.6%
PPBE & POM	87.4%
Systems Acquisition Management	86.1%
Cost Analysis	84.6%
Quality Assurance	82.4%
Test & Evaluation	78.5%
Configuration Management	78.3%
Earned Value Management	74.6%
Information Systems Acquisition	73.1%
Performance based Logistics	72.4%
Software Acquisition	71.4%
Lean Six Sigma	<b>61.7%</b>
Depot Operations	<b>52.9%</b>

## **F. ACQUISITION TRAINING AND EDUCATION TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

### **1. Source and Value of Initial Acquisition Training**

The primary initial training venue for military service members and DoD civilian employees was dramatically different. Military service members most often attended the AABC (78.8%), while 71.5% of DoD civilian employees completed their initial training through DAU (either online or resident) courses. DoD civilian employees (11.7%) reported that they had also attended the Acquisition Basic Course; however, many noted in the comments section that they attended that formalized entry-level training while they were a military service member. Thus, the completion rate of a basic course for DoD civilian employees is much less than the 11.7% reported.

#### **a. Efficient Method of Training**

The data showed that civilian employees and military service members were very similar in nature regarding their perceptions of efficient methods of their initial training, with only small variances of “agree” or “disagree” within the Likert scale. Of particular note in this data is that over 18% of those civilian employees who attained their initial training through internship felt that this type of training was not an efficient method of training.



**b. *Effective Method of Training***

We changed the question slightly to determine whether acquisition workforce members perceived a difference between efficient and effective methods of training. The difference between answers, other than internship training, indicated less than 3% variance. Respondents generally felt that the internship was less effective than it was efficient.

**c. *Intellectually Challenging***

Respondents did feel that their source of initial training challenged them intellectually. The lowest responses were from those who obtained their initial training through other traditional means, of which only 85.2% responded with some form of agreement. The highest rated category consisted of individuals who earned their initial training through NPS, of which 95.2% agreed that the course challenged them.

**d. *Provided the Necessary Tools***

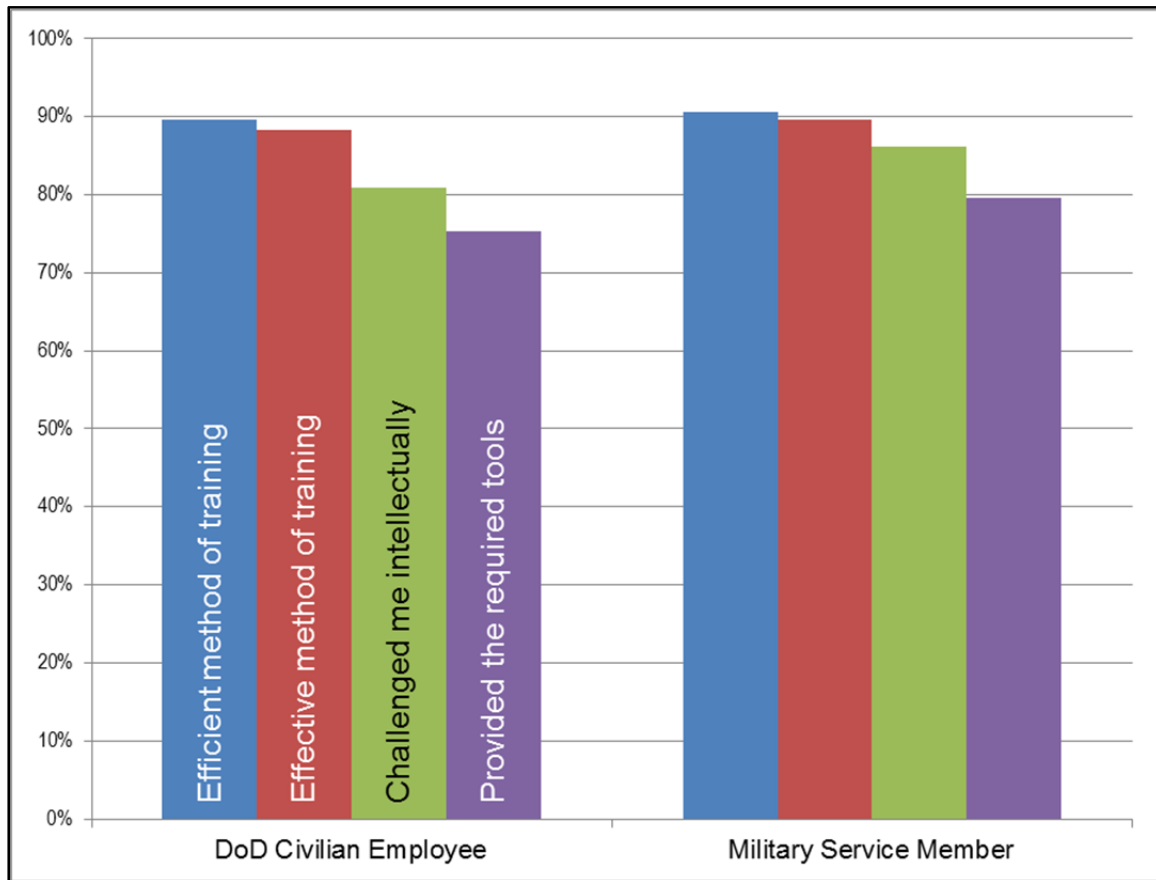
The two venues of initial training, DAU and internship, rated lowest (73.7% and 73.3%, respectively), with respondents stating that they were provided the necessary tools for their first acquisition assignments. Over 97.4% of the NPS students agreed that they were provided the required tools for their first acquisition assignments. From our own experience, this is partly due to the intensity of NPS coursework tying an MBA degree with DAWIA Level III training and education requirements.

**e. *Compared Value Between DoD Civilian Employees vs. Military Service Members***

The next section pooled all favorable responses (“somewhat agree,” “agree,” and “strongly agree”) and combined the previous value-related questions regarding the initial entry-level training provided to acquisition workforce members. This data was further divided into two categories, DoD civilian employee and military service member, as shown in Figure 3. Military service members overall reported a higher value towards their initial entry-level training. The largest difference between the two compared acquisition workforce categories was the question that asked if initial entry-level training challenged them intellectually. Military service members had a larger percentage (86.1%) that reported that their initial entry-level training challenged them intellectually compared to DoD civilian employees (81.0%). As mentioned earlier, many of the DoD civilian employees did indicate in the remarks section that they had served in the acquisition workforce as a military service member. Unfortunately, the survey did not have a direct question that would allow



this type of data to be separated out. Thus, there is a high probability that the favorable rating for these questions is skewed proportionately larger.



**Figure 3. Comparing the Value of Initial Entry-Level Training Held by DoD Civilian Employees vs. Military Service Members**

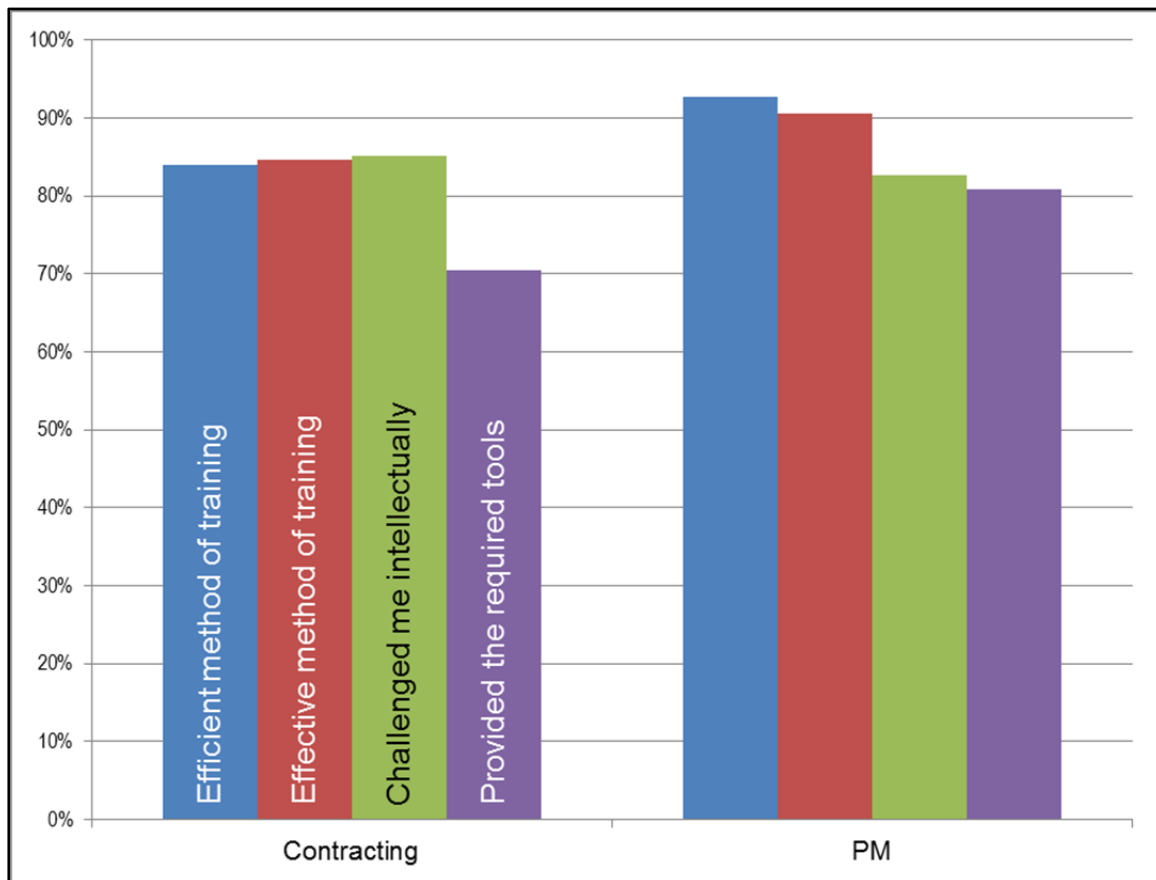
***f. Compared Value Between Contracting vs. PM ACFs***

The next section similarly pooled all favorable responses (“somewhat agree,” “agree,” and “strongly agree”) and combined the previous value-related questions regarding the initial entry-level training provided to acquisition workforce members. This data was further divided into two different categories, contracting and PM ACFs, as shown in Figure 4. Similar to previous comparisons, PM ACF employees valued their initial-level training much more than their counterparts in the contracting ACF. The largest difference in value for initial entry-level training between the contracting and PM ACFs was in the perception of whether the acquisition workforce employees were provided the required tools to perform their first assignment. More than 80.5% of the PM acquisition employees perceived that the initial entry-level training provided them the necessary tools, compared to fewer than 70.5% of the contracting ACF. Contracting can be one of the most challenging ACFs because it consists of two separate, almost entirely different career paths.





One path is the more garrison-orientated contracting route that routinely deals with writing and awarding large contracts in support of procurement purposes. The other, perhaps more challenging, path is called contingency contracting, which provides service contracts with foreign nationals in support of U.S. military operations around the world. Preparing acquisition workforce employees for these types of duties is difficult because many times, unique challenges arise that cannot be taught in a classroom environment.



**Figure 4. Comparing the Value of Initial Entry-Level Training Held by Contracting vs. PM ACFs**

## 2. Required DAU Certification Standards

The next question asked respondents about their perceived value of the three training categories required by the DAU: Core Certification Standards, UPTS, and Core Plus Developmental Guide.

### a. Core Certification Standards

For this set of data, the two primary ACFs (program management and contracting) were compared to each other. These two ACFs comprised over 66% of





the total survey-data population. All populations within this subgroup submitted similar responses placing value on the Core Certification Standards. The greatest variance was with military service members in the program management ACF, who were 3.8% more likely to respond positively than their civilian counterparts.

***b. Unique Position Training Standards***

The value of the UPTS category dropped approximately 8.1% in favorable value from the Core Certification Standards. These standards are normally reserved for those assuming higher level positions, such as program managers. Further, oftentimes officers are scheduled to attend courses after they have already been serving in the position for several months. As the majority of the survey respondents suggested, if on-the-job training (OJT) is seen as perhaps the most valuable training method, courses after the fact may only be viewed as a distraction, rather than as value-added training.

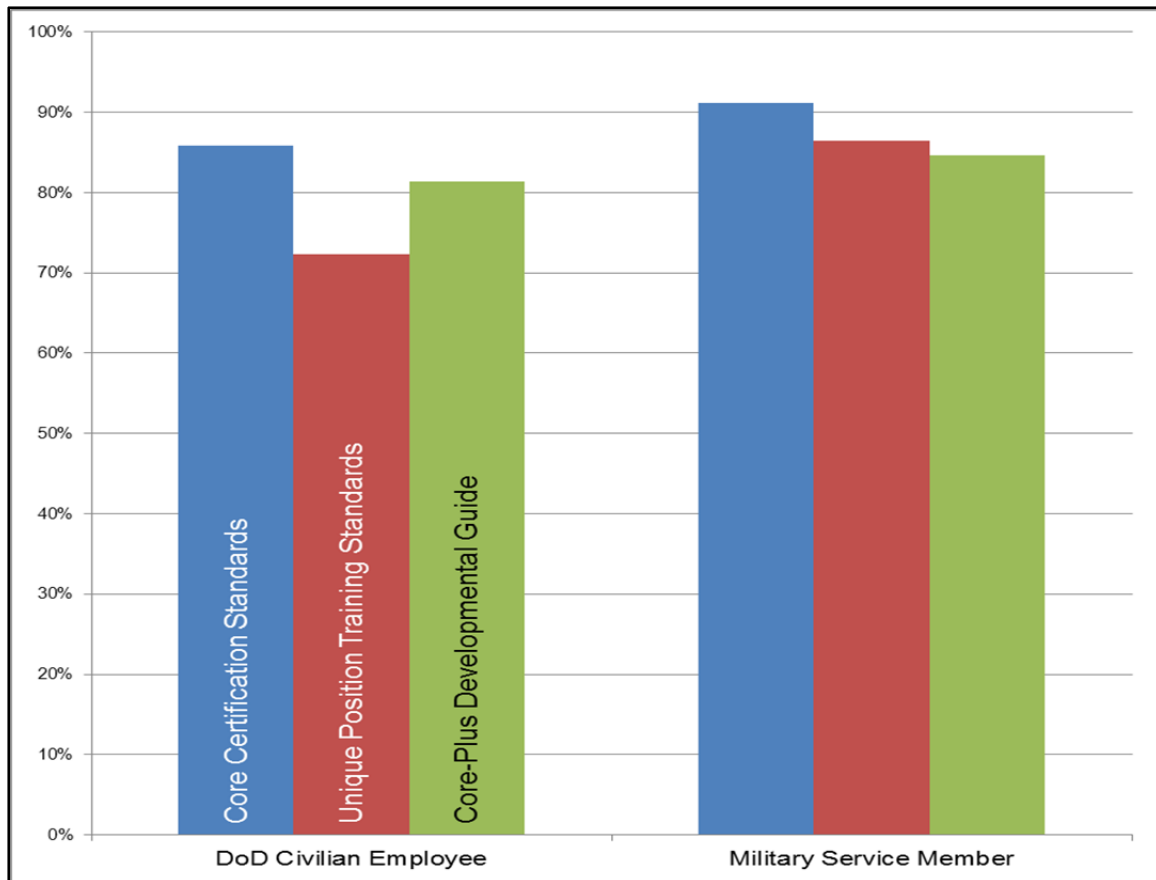
***c. Core Plus Developmental Guide***

The last category of training modules is used primarily as additional courses in support of CLPs. The Core Plus Developmental Guide does not count towards certification but is recommended as additional courses after the primary courses are completed. Respondents in program management as a whole were more likely to place less value on this category than the contracting ACF.

***d. Compared Value Between DoD Civilian Employees vs. Military Service Members***

The next section pooled all favorable responses (“somewhat agree,” “agree,” and “strongly agree”) and combined the previous value-related questions regarding the DAU certification standards required of acquisition workforce members. This data is further divided into two categories, DoD civilian employee and military service member, as shown in Figure 5. Military service members overall reported a significantly higher value towards the DAU certification standards than DoD civilian employees. The largest difference between the two compared acquisition workforce categories was value of the UPTS. Military service members had a larger percentage (86.4%) that reported finding value within the UPTS, as compared to DoD civilian employees (72.4%). This increase in value may be due in part to the fact that the UPTS primarily pertains to those acquisition workforce employees who hold key positions within the acquisition community, such as PM or PEO. Although these positions are open, and are often held by DoD civilian employees, these positions are predominately filled by military service members.

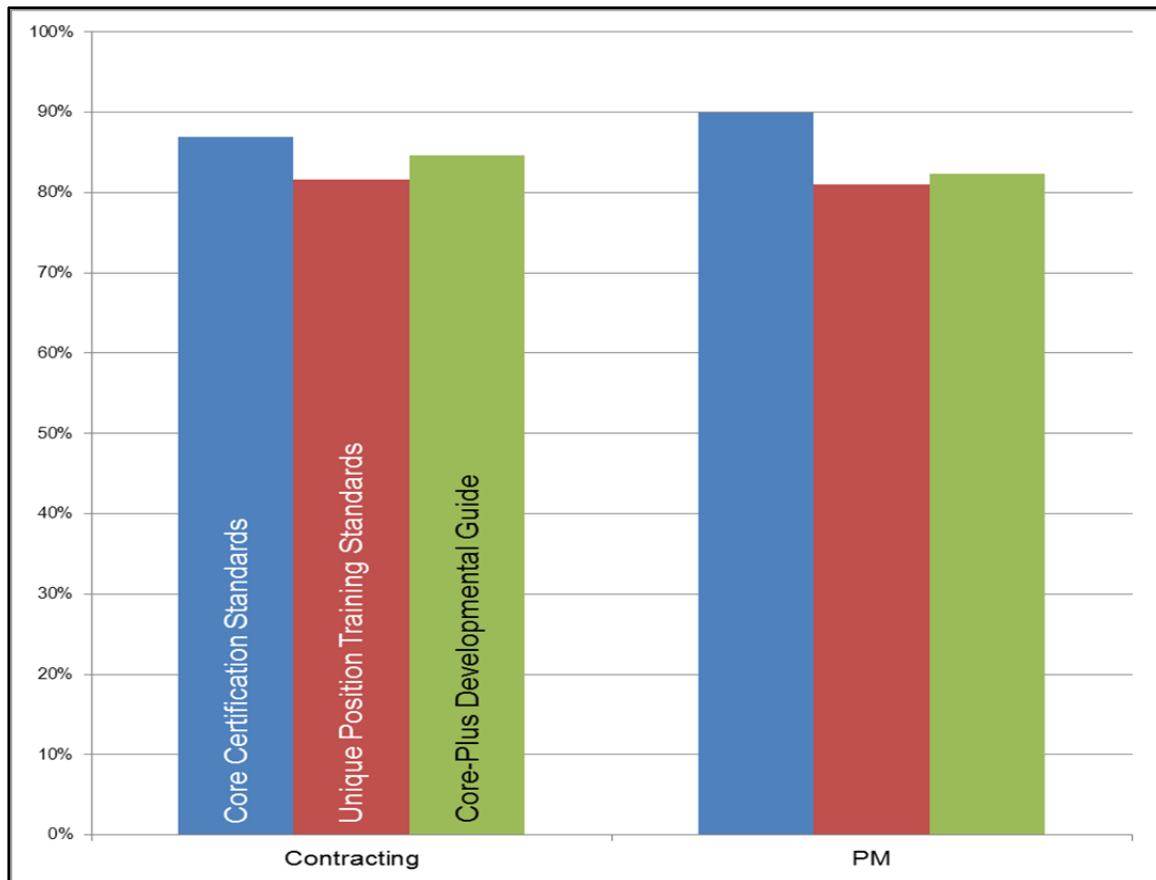




**Figure 5. Comparing the Value of DAU Certification Requirements Held by DoD Civilian Employees vs. Military Service Members**

**e. Compared Value Between Contracting vs. PM ACFs**

The next section similarly pooled all favorable responses (“somewhat agree,” “agree,” and “strongly agree”) and combined the previous value-related questions regarding the DAU certification requirements to the acquisition workforce members. This data was further divided into two different categories, contracting and PM ACFs, as shown in Figure 6. Unlike the previous comparisons (see Figure 5), PM ACF employees valued their initial-level training almost identically to their counterparts in the contracting ACF. The largest difference in value DAU certification requirements between the contracting and PM ACFs was in the value of Core Certification Standards, but there was only about a 3.0% difference.



**Figure 6. Comparing the Value of DAU Certification Requirements Held by Contracting vs. PM ACFs**

### 3. Most Valuable Source of Knowledge

This question asked the respondents to provide the source of knowledge that made the greatest contribution toward success in their acquisition careers. Overwhelmingly, the response for both program management and contracting was OJT. Over 65.8% of the total population ranked OJT as the most valuable source of knowledge. The four lowest sources of knowledge included conferences (1.0%), internships (1.1%), training with industry (TWI; 1.1%), and DAU online modules (2.2%), all of which received less than 5.5% of the vote combined. Of note is that DAU online training modules consistently rated the lowest when comparing both PM and contracting ACFs as well as for military service members compared to DoD civilian employees. This is significant because online modules are the primary source of training for all of the DAWIA-approved certification levels across the different ACFs.



#### **4. Value of Common Acquisition Functions**

The survey requested the perceived value of common functions performed within the acquisition workforce. These activities can all count toward either certification or CLPs.

##### ***a. Acquisition-Related Conferences***

This category garnished the most not-valuable responses, with over 15% stating that these experiences were not valuable. Almost 29% indicated a neutral position, which left just under 57% finding value with the category.

##### ***b. On-the-Job Training***

OJT was by far the most valued category, with over 95% of respondents reporting that OJT was either “valuable” or “very valuable.” This supplements the interview we conducted in which LTG Yakovac (Ret.; 2013) stated, “The acquisition world is one of practitioners not theoretical.” While the formal training received is certainly valuable, the acquisition workforce has consistently reported throughout the survey that “hands-on doing” was simply the best method to further develop the “trade” of acquisition.

##### ***c. DAU Online Training Modules***

Online training modules rated least valuable second only to acquisition-related conferences. Over 13% of respondents stated that the modules were of little or no value. The results are similar to what was found in an earlier question and have received similar negative response rates across contracting and PM ACFs as well as DoD civilian employees and military service members.

##### ***d. DAU Resident Courses***

Resident courses scored much higher than the Internet courses also offered by the DAU. Over 88% of the respondents found value with this form of training.

##### ***e. Training with Industry***

This category had the highest rating of “neutral” for both the military service members as well as DoD civilian employees. This is most easily explained in that TWI is not a common training opportunity for the majority of the acquisition workforce. Fewer than 55 respondents reported that they had used TWI as a career-enhancing development tool.



***f. Advanced Civil Schooling***

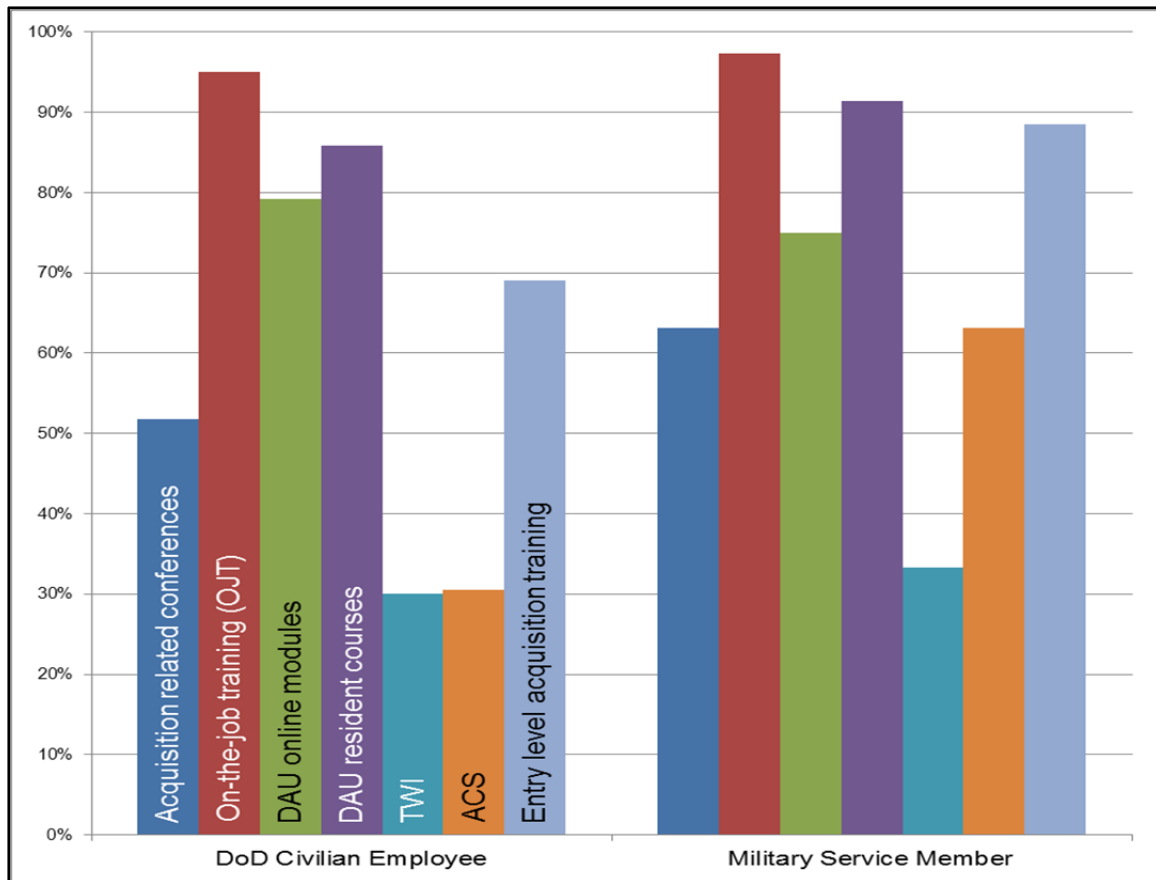
There was a significant difference between the value placed on advanced civil schooling (ACS) by DoD civilian employees and the value placed on ACS by military service members. Nearly a third (34.1%) more of the military service member population were likely to value ACS. This can be explained by the fact that there are simply more military service members who compete and earn the opportunity to attend ACS. For most officer models, ACS is built into the officer's career path and is certainly a discriminator at senior officer promotion boards.

***g. Entry-Level Acquisition Training***

This portion of the question again asked for the value placed on entry-level acquisition training. The answer for both the military and civilian populations was slightly less positive than when asked earlier.

The following two figures (Figure 7 and Figure 8) combine the previous questions into one graph and show how many respondents found value (responded with either "somewhat valuable," "valuable," or "very valuable") with the indicated function. Figure 7 shows the collection of responses combined across the different categories comparing DoD civilian employee responses to military service member responses. The largest differentiation in responses was the favorable response to ACS from military service members. Normal career paths of acquisition military service members include ACS, which may explain the increased value over their DoD civilian employee counterparts.

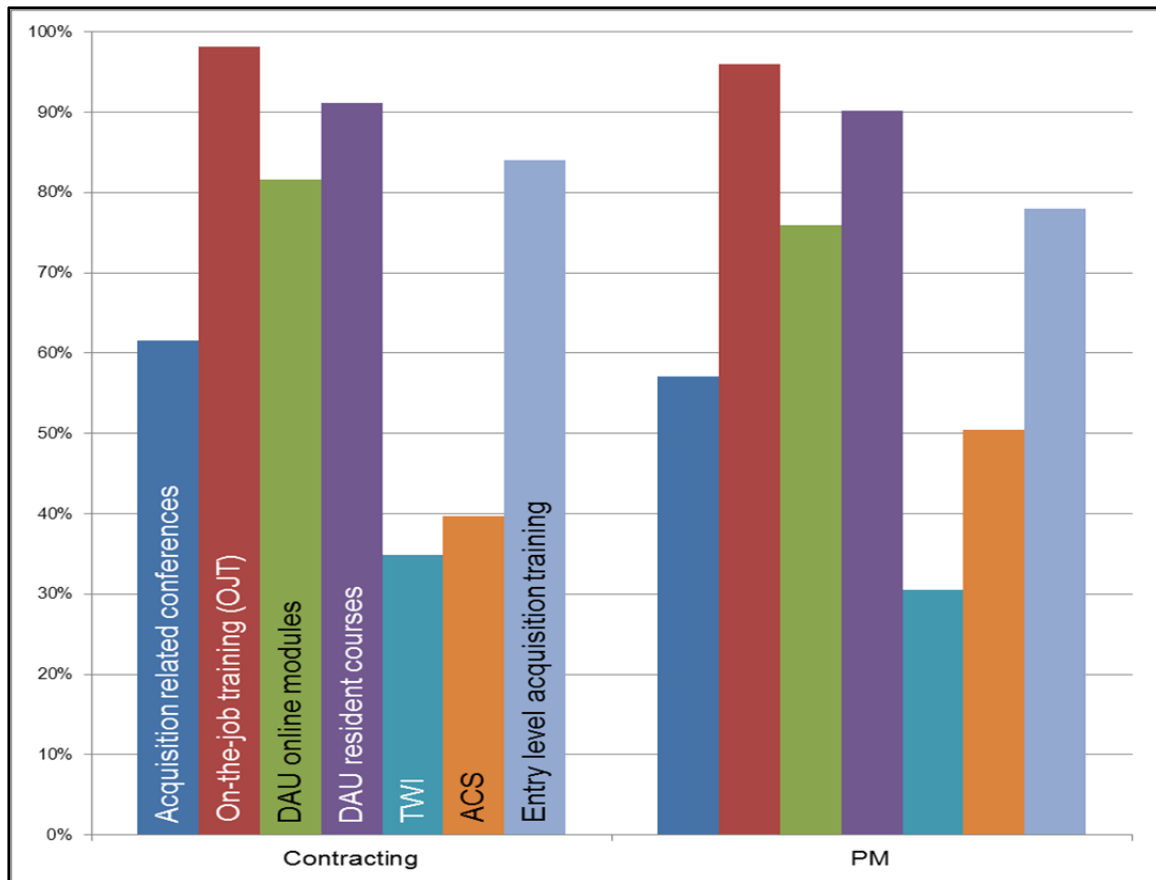




**Figure 7. Comparing the Value of Common Acquisition Functions Held by DoD Civilian Employees vs. Military Service Members**

Figure 8 combines the previous questions into one graph and shows how many respondents found value (responded with either “somewhat valuable,” “valuable,” or “very valuable”) with the listed function. Figure 8 compares contracting responses to PM ACF responses. Similar to Figure 7, the major difference is found when comparing the perceived value of ACS between contracting and PM ACFs.





**Figure 8. Comparing the Value of Common Acquisition Functions Held by Contracting vs. PM ACFs**

## 5. Value Placed on Certifications

The next set of questions requested the respondents' perceptions regarding the sufficiency of the knowledge obtained from achieving the three different certification levels.

### a. Level I Certification

The survey asked if Level I certification provides sufficient technical knowledge to successfully perform in a job that requires Level I certification. Military service members had a 5.2% more positive response toward the value of Level I certification than their civilian counterparts. In both the military and civilian populations, nearly 20% did not consider Level I certification as providing sufficient technical knowledge for Level I assignments. This is significant because most civilians do not participate in formal entry-level training. Military service members normally attend the AABC at Huntsville, AL, where they attain most of their certifications for both Level I and Level II. However, the data showed that even with

formal entry-level training, Level I certification requirements may not be sufficient enough to accomplish the day-to-day tasks of a Level I designated position.

***b. Level II Certification***

The survey then asked whether Level II certification provides sufficient technical knowledge to successfully perform in a job that requires Level II certification. The data for the civilian and military populations was similar. The percentage of those who replied negatively on placing value on Level II certification rose to over 24%.

***c. Level III Certification***

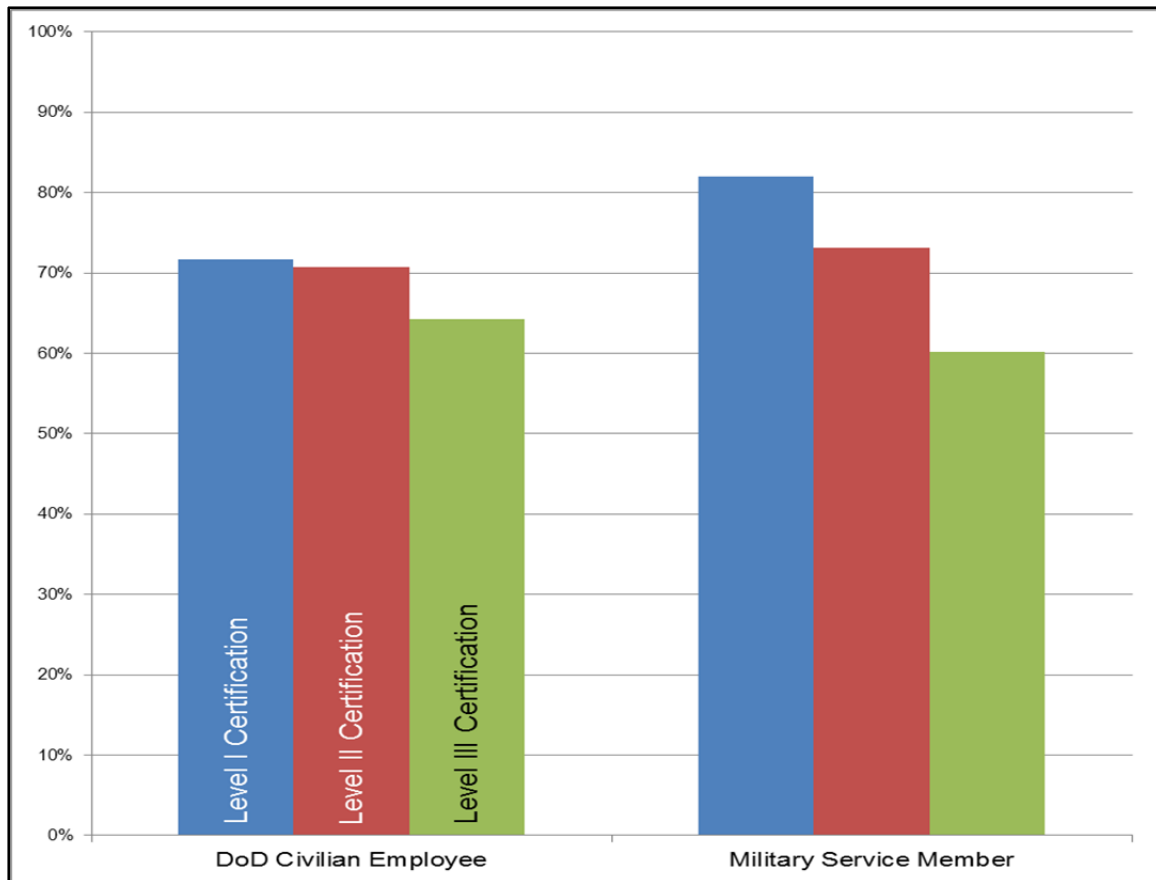
The survey next asked whether Level III certification provides sufficient technical knowledge to successfully perform in a job that requires Level III certification. Military service members had a 5.9% more negative response toward Level III certification than their civilian counterparts. Overall, over a third (33.2%) disagreed that Level III certification provided sufficient training for a Level III assigned position.

***d. Compared Value of Certifications of DoD Civilian Employees vs. Military Service Members***

The next section pooled all favorable responses (“somewhat agree,” “agree,” and “strongly agree”) and combined the previous value-related questions regarding the value of the three different certifications levels. This data was further divided into two categories, DoD civilian employee and military service member, as shown in Figure 9. Military service members expressed an overall larger sense of value towards the worth of the certification levels for Level I and Level II, but DoD civilian employees held Level III with more value. The greatest variance between DoD civilian employees and military service members existed in the perceived value of Level I certification. A larger percentage (82.0%) of military service members reported that Certification Level I provided them sufficient technical knowledge to successfully perform Level I-type tasks compared to DoD civilian employees (71.7%). Although both groups placed a relatively high value on the certification, both reported decreased value with increasing certification. This suggests that a training gap exists at the higher certification levels.





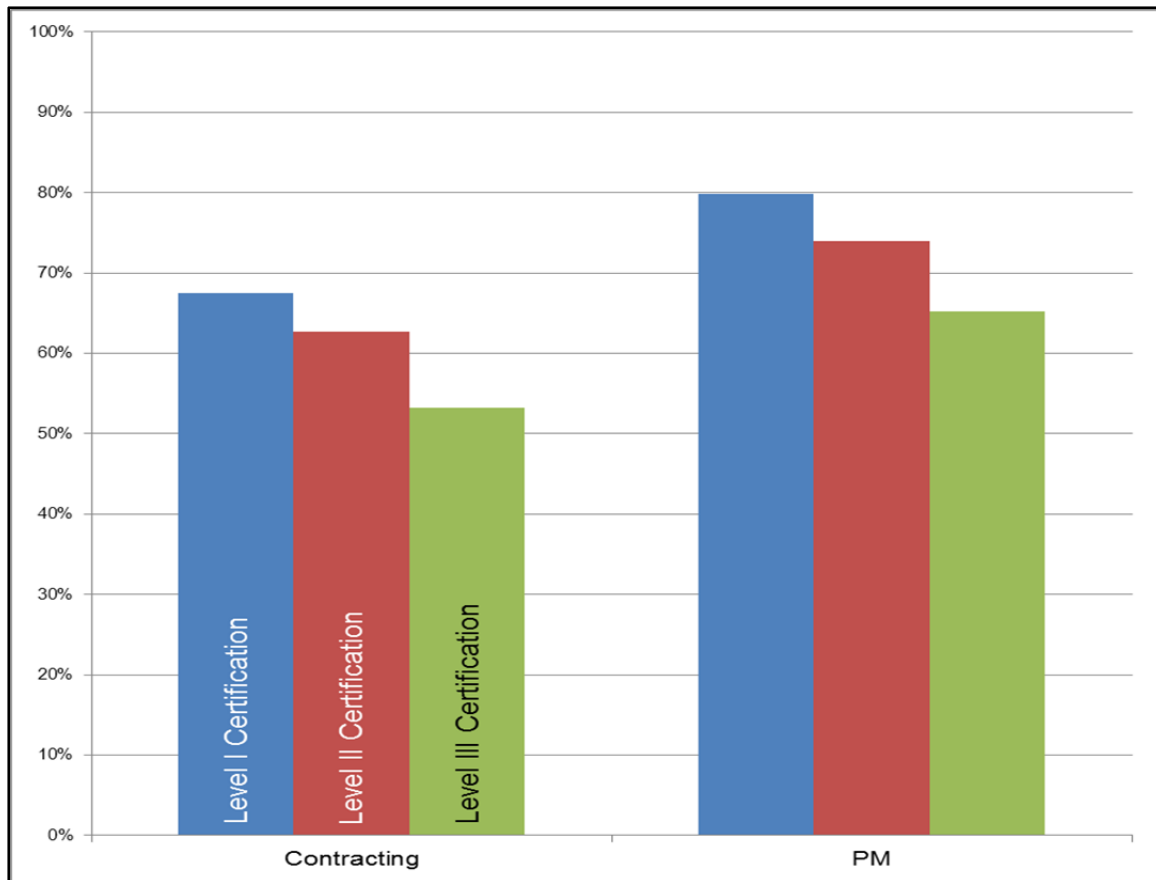


**Figure 9. Comparing the Value of Certification Levels Held by DoD Civilian Employees vs. Military Service Members**

**e. Compared Value of Certification Levels Between Contracting vs. PM ACFs**

The next section similarly pooled all favorable responses (“somewhat agree,” “agree,” and “strongly agree”) and combined the previous value-related questions regarding certification levels required for the acquisition workforce member to complete. This data was further divided into two different categories, contracting and PM ACFs, as shown in Figure 10. Similar to previous comparisons, PM ACF employees valued the varying certification levels much more than their counterparts in the contracting ACF. The largest difference in value of certification levels between the contracting and PM ACFs was Certification Level I. Nearly 80.0% of the PM acquisition employees perceived that Certification Level I requirements provided them with the necessary tools, compared to 67.5% of the contracting ACF.





**Figure 10. Comparing the Value of Initial Entry-Level Training Held by Contracting vs. PM ACFs**

#### **6. Supervisor Flexible to Allow Certification During Work Hours**

The next question asked whether respondents' supervisors were flexible with work schedules to allow online certification training opportunities during normal work hours. The two populations, military service members and DoD civilian employees, responded alike, with over 90% reporting favorably that their supervisors allowed them to work on certification requirements during normal work hours. Although not required, many supervisors exercise this option because work within acquisition offices is typically cyclic, especially in the contracting ACF. Most offices have fiscal year quarters that have heightened workloads based on annual budgets; thus, many supervisors are able to keep their employees active by assigning online modules.

### **G. PERCEIVED COMPETENCE AMONG THE ACQUISITION WORKFORCE**

#### **1. Perceptions of Team Deficiency**

The next set of questions gathered information on the effects of perceptions of team deficiency. This section of the survey first questioned whether the respondent had ever perceived a team deficiency in a particular skill set that



hindered the progress of that program or project. Just over 46% of respondents positively replied that they had perceived a team deficiency. If respondents replied in the positive, they were then given a set of questions that measured the impact of this perceived deficiency.

**a. *Decrease in Job Satisfaction***

The first sub-question requested whether respondents had observed a decrease in the organization's collective job satisfaction due to an identified deficiency of a skill set that hindered their team's success. On the whole, over 73% replied that they had observed a decrease in this situation. The civilian population had a slightly higher percentage of positive responses than the military service members.

**b. *Decrease in Organizational Commitment***

The next sub-question asked whether respondents had observed a decrease in the collective organizational commitment resulting from a team deficiency. The positive response rate dropped to just over 63% for effects on organizational commitment. The positive response rates of the military service member and DoD civilian populations were similar.

**c. *Decrease in Motivation***

Over 72% replied that they had perceived a decrease in motivation because of a team deficiency. Between the two populations of military service members and DoD civilian employees, there were similar responses.

**d. *Decrease in Sense of Competence***

The next sub-question inquired whether there was a decrease in the organization's collective feelings or sense of competence because of a team deficiency. Of those that responded, 78.8% replied that they had, to some extent, observed a decrease in feelings of competence for the organization as a whole.

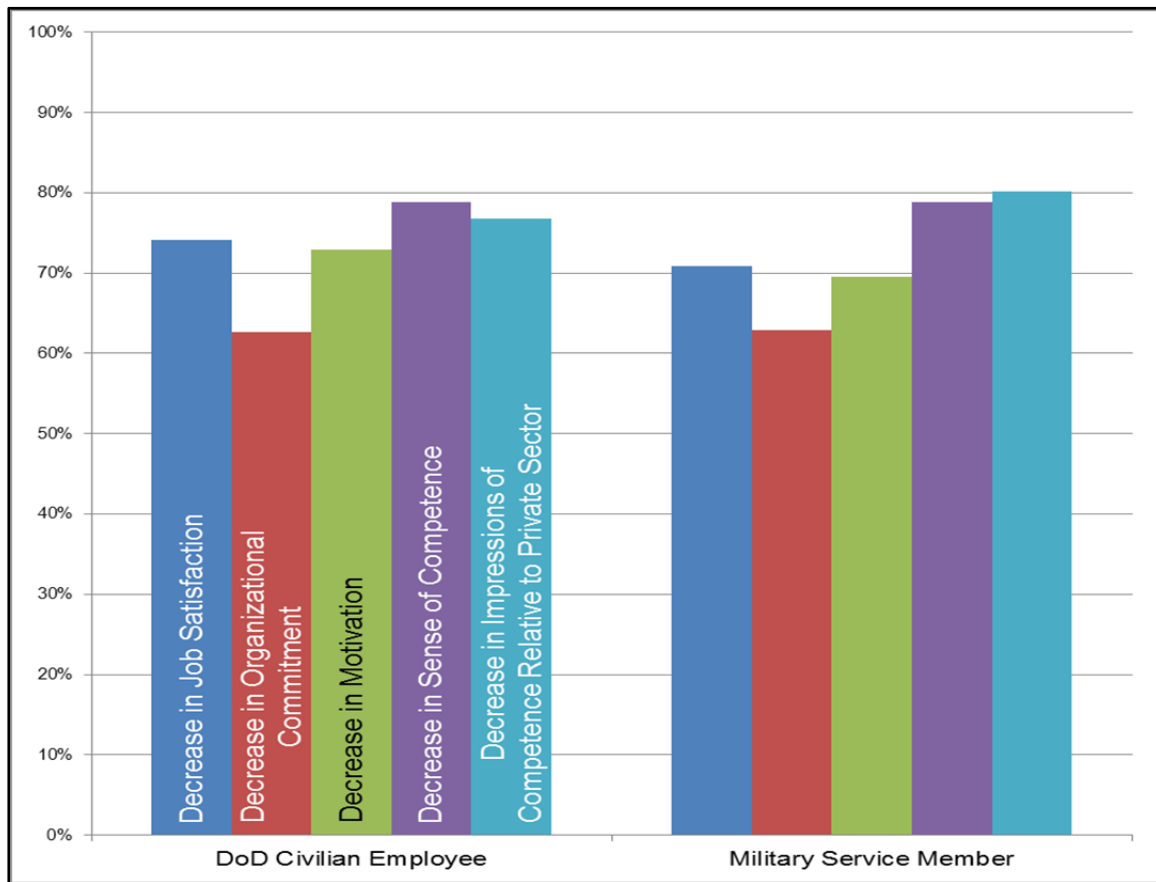
**e. *Decrease in Impressions of Competence Relative to Those in the Private Sector***

The final sub-question inquired into a decrease in the organization's collective impressions of competence relative to those in the private sector. Nearly 78% of those that responded stated that they had observed a decrease in impressions of competence relative to industry counterparts.



**f. Compared Team Perceptions of Acquisition Workforce Behavior Between DoD Civilian Employees vs. Military Service Members**

The next section pooled all favorable responses (“somewhat agree,” “agree,” and “strongly agree”) and combined the previous value-related questions regarding perceived workforce behaviors. This data was further divided into two categories, DoD civilian employee and military service member, as shown in Figure 11. The percentages were nearly identical between DoD civilian employees and military service members, with the largest deviation a less than 3.5% difference. Of the acquisition workforce that had observed a team deficiency, 62.8% reported a decrease in organizational commitment, which was the lowest category in the group. The tie between DoD civilian employees and military service members to their sense of competence of the team is highly connected with positive workforce behaviors. Leveraging this information to the team’s advantage could be an important factor in increasing successful group outcomes, especially when considering current budget woes.

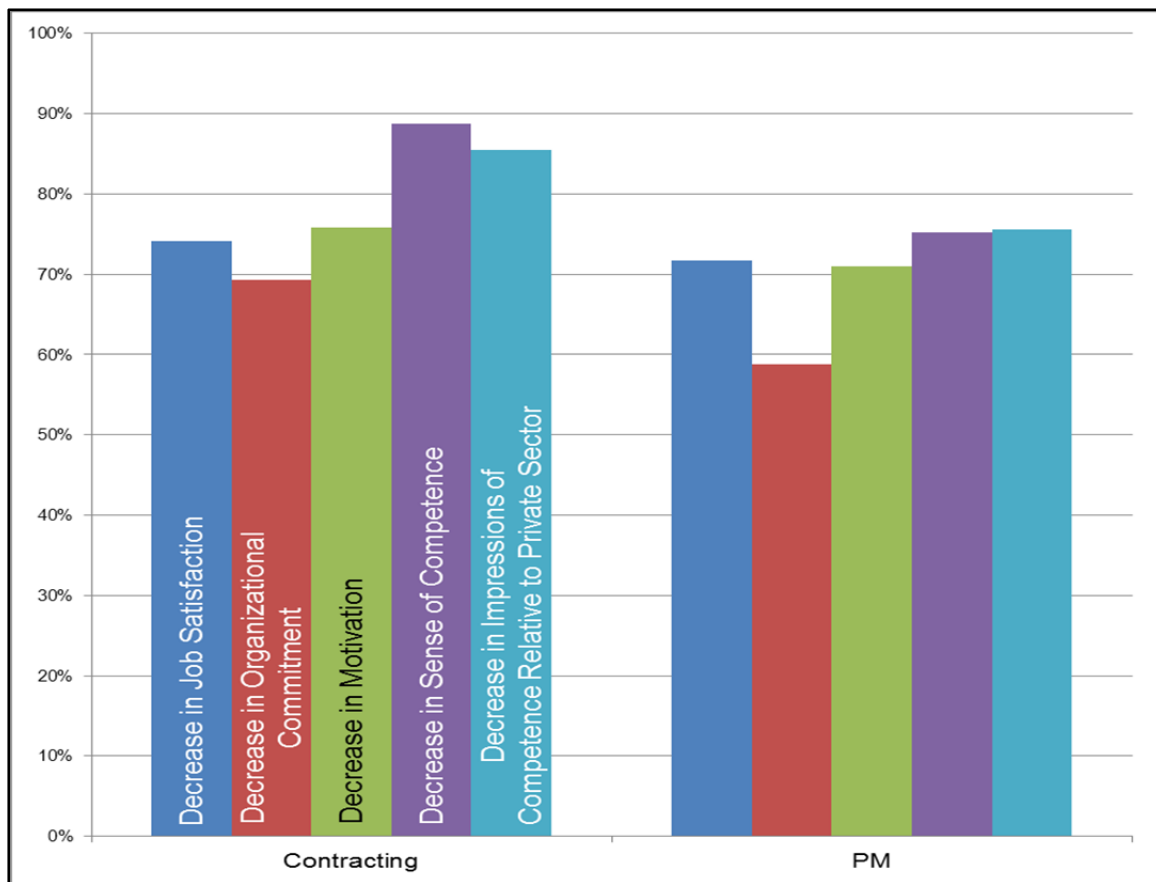


**Figure 11. Comparing the Team Perceptions of Acquisition Workforce Behavior of DoD Civilian Employees vs. Military Service Members**



**g. Compared Team Perceptions of Acquisition Workforce Behavior Between Contracting vs. PM ACFs**

The next section similarly pooled all favorable responses (“somewhat agree,” “agree,” and “strongly agree”) and combined the perceptions of acquisition workforce behaviors to the acquisition workforce member. This data was further divided into two different categories, contracting and PM ACFs, as shown in Figure 12. Contractor ACFs felt the largest decrease in workforce behaviors. The category “decrease in sense of competence” showed the largest difference between the two ACFs. 88.7% of contracting professionals reported a decrease in the sense of competence, as compared to 75.2% of PM ACFs. This difference may be due to the fact that workers in PM offices are generally arrayed in matrix work formats. This means that PM workers do not always work on the same team, as compared to contracting ACFs, which commonly form more permanent working groups.



**Figure 12. Comparing the Team Perceptions of Acquisition Workforce Behavior of Contracting vs. PM ACFs**

## **2. Perceptions of Individual Deficiency**

The next set of questions mirrored those in the previous question (Question 28) but instead pertained to respondents' own deficiencies.

### ***a. Decrease in Job Satisfaction***

The question asked whether respondents had personally felt a decrease in their job satisfaction because of a perceived deficiency in their own acquisition skill sets. Positive responses as a whole were fewer than for the previous section. Approximately 44% responded in the affirmative that they had perceived a decrease in job satisfaction because of a self-perceived deficiency in their own acquisition skills. This response is similar to the data reported (46%) in the previous question, when asking about team deficiencies and job satisfaction.

### ***b. Decrease in Organizational Commitment***

The next sub-question asked whether respondents had a decrease in organizational commitment because of a perceived deficiency in an acquisition skill set of the respondent. Less than 30% responded that they had personally felt a decrease in organizational commitment. The organizational commitment was not as affected by perceived individual deficiencies as it was by team deficiencies (63%).

### ***c. Decrease in Motivation***

The survey then inquired whether the respondents felt a decrease in motivation resulting from a perceived deficiency in their own acquisition skill sets. Only 35% responded that they had felt a decrease in motivation, down from over 70% in the team area.

### ***d. Decrease in Sense of Competence***

The next sub-question inquired into a decrease of the organization's collective feelings or sense of competence because of a team deficiency. Of those that responded, 44.6% replied that they had, to some extent, observed a decrease in feelings of competence for the organization as a whole.

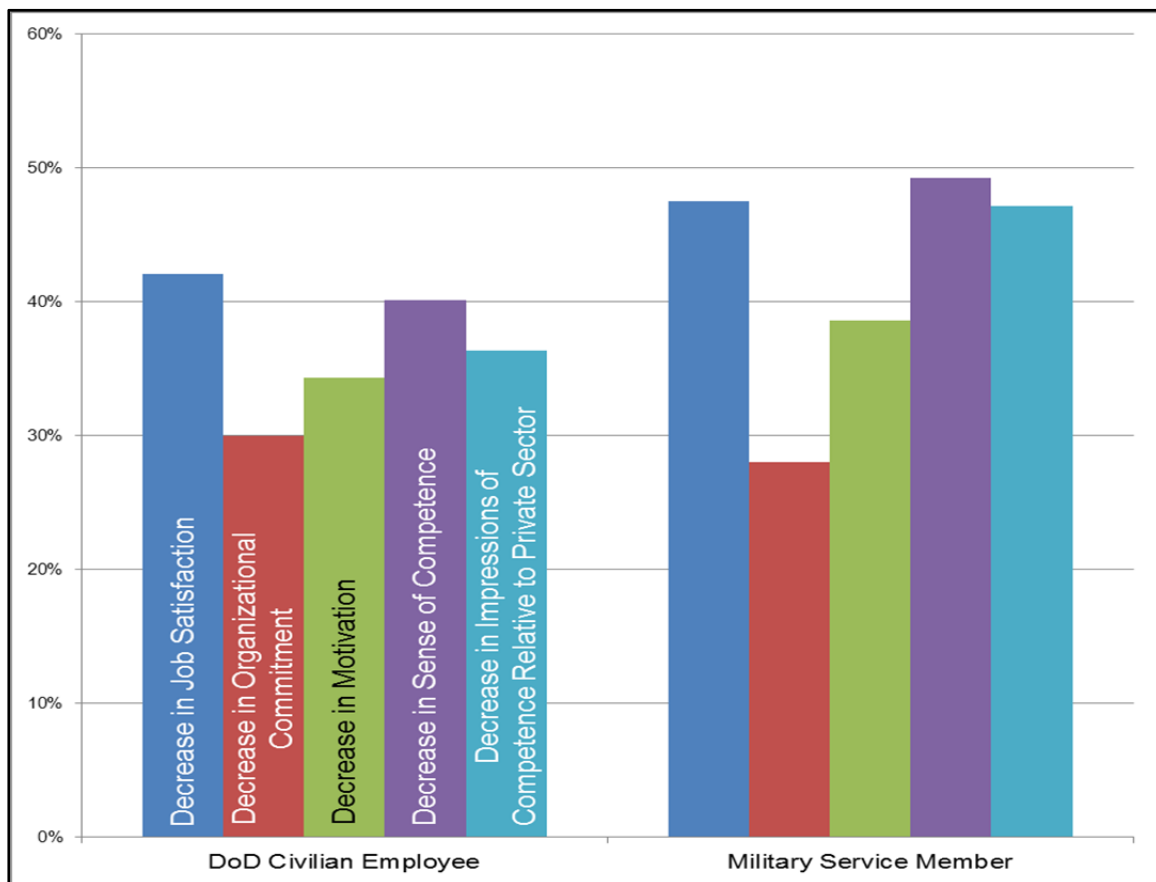
### ***e. Decrease in Impressions of Competence Relative to Those in the Private Sector***

The final sub-question inquired into a decrease in the organization's collective impressions of competence relative to those in the private sector. Nearly 41% of those who responded stated that they had observed a decrease in impressions of competence relative to industry counterparts.



**f. Compared Individual Perceptions of Acquisition Workforce Behavior of DoD Civilian Employees vs. Military Service Members**

The next section pooled all favorable responses (“somewhat agree,” “agree,” and “strongly agree”) and combined the previous value-related questions regarding perceived workforce behaviors. This data was further divided into two categories, DoD civilian employee and military service member, as shown in Figure 13. The percentages were similar between DoD civilian employees and military service members. The largest difference in category was that of a decrease in “impressions of competence relative to the private sector,” where 47.2% of military service members reported that they had felt these impressions, as compared to only 36.4% of DoD civilian employees. Of the acquisition workforce that had observed a deficiency, only 29.7% reported a decrease in organizational commitment, which was again the lowest category in the group. Overall, respondents perceived themselves to have less of a decrease in workforce behaviors than in a team by nearly 30% across the board.

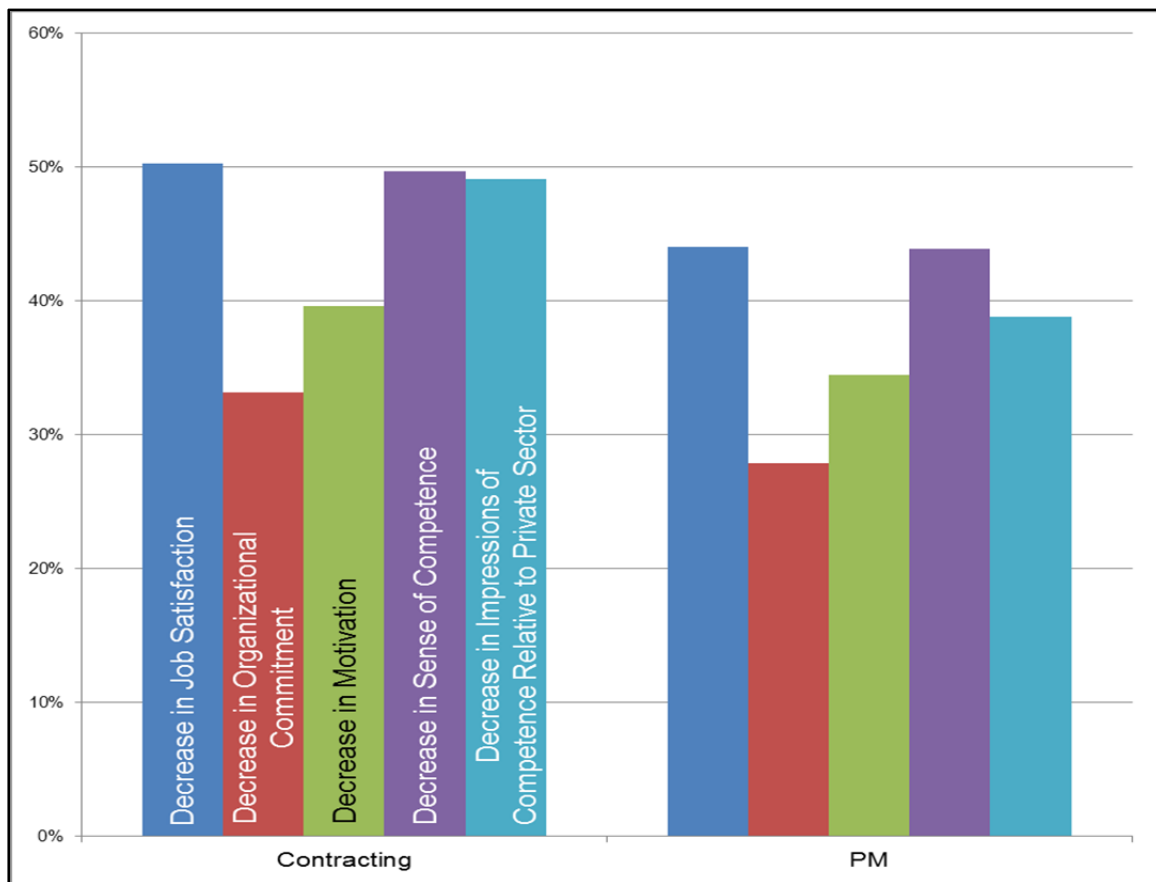


**Figure 13. Comparing the Individual Perceptions of Acquisition Workforce Behavior of DoD Civilian Employees vs. Military Service Members**



**g. Compared Individual Perceptions of Acquisition Workforce Behavior of Contracting vs. PM ACFs**

The next section similarly pooled all favorable responses (“somewhat agree,” “agree,” and “strongly agree”) and combined the perceptions of acquisition workforce individuals’ behaviors. This data was further divided into two different categories, contracting and PM ACFs, as shown in Figure 14. Contractor ACFs felt the largest decrease in workforce behaviors. The category “decrease in impressions of competence relative to private sector” showed the largest difference between the two ACFs. 49.1% of contracting professionals reported a decrease in the sense of competence, as compared to 38.8% of PM ACFs.



**Figure 14. Comparing the Individual Perceptions of Acquisition Workforce Behavior of Contracting vs. PM ACFs**

**H. ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATION AND CERTIFICATION**

**1. Length of DAWIA Certification**

The next question asked how long the DAWIA certification should be valid, even when achieving CLPs. The question gave the respondents the choice of selecting between one and eight years, as well as an “other” option. Over 48.6%





chose the “other” response, indicating they favored that DAWIA certification should remain valid for more than eight years. The respondents who chose “other” were also given the option to fill in remarks, and the majority who opted to write in a remark indicated their opinions that certification should be indefinite. Of those who responded, nearly 15% more DoD civilian employees desired that certification remain valid for more than eight years compared to military service members.

**a. *DAWIA Refresher Course Value***

The next sub-question asked how mandating a refresher course for DAWIA recertification after a set number of years (as identified in the previous question) would contribute to the collective acquisition workforce. As a whole, over 55% felt that adding a refresher course would add value to the collective acquisition workforce. Military service members (59.3%) valued this course slightly more than DoD civilian employees (53.8%) did.

**b. *Current/Relevant Experience Value***

The next question asked respondents about the benefit/value of mandating a current/relevant experience requirement for DAWIA recertification after a set number of years in terms of its contribution to the collective acquisition workforce. Over 62% who responded saw value in mandating that acquisition professionals retain some type of current/relevant experience if they want to maintain their current certifications. Of that group of respondents, military service members (69.8%) held current/relevant experience in higher value than DoD civilian service members (58.4%) did.

**c. *Acquisition Monitoring System Value***

The last sub-question queried whether a qualification monitoring system—separate from the DAWIA certification process—to track an individual’s actual acquisition experiences (e.g., participation on a source selection board, attending a test and evaluation event, participating in a brief to the Milestone Decision Authority) would help improve the overall quality of the acquisition workforce. This question was broken down into both DoD civilian employee and military service member categories, as well as program management and contracting categories, to show differences between the communities. The contracting and program management communities of the DoD civilian employee population were almost evenly split. However, the two communities within the military service member population showed a dramatic difference.



## **V. CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, & AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

### **A. CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the perceptions of the sampled acquisition workforce members whom we found through our survey, education opportunities seem to be satisfactory. Many respondents did report that the acquisition workforce educational framework has been established adequately, but the work experience (i.e., OJT) is crucial to their professional development. This result supports some of our interviews in which many senior leaders conveyed the need to view the acquisition workforce as a trade or practice versus a research or theoretical field of study. Overall, the sampled acquisition workforce felt that the certifications did provide the training necessary to perform their duties. These numbers are, however, much lower than expected. Nearly a third in the ACF categories of PM and contracting, and all certification levels, claimed that the certification was insufficient in order to successfully achieve their duties.

There were relatively few deviations between the perceptions of acquisition workforce members who held the ACFs of contracting and PM. Most notable was the perception that a separate qualification monitoring system would be beneficial to the acquisition workforce. Nearly 72% of contractors in uniformed service reported that a separate qualification monitoring system would be of use, as compared to less than 47% of PMs in uniformed service. This may have to do with the nature of contingency contracting, which has many education variables that just may not be conducive to the classroom, because contingency contracting is most likely the most unpredictable field of the acquisition community.

There were many more deviations between the civilian workforce and uniformed service members. Most notably, nearly 90% of military service members placed value on the acquisition entry-level training, as compared to less than 70% of civilian workers. Typically, civilian workers are not afforded the same formalized resident entry-level training as their military counterparts. But not requiring formalized civilian entry-level training proves to have minor overall effects because both the civilian workforce and the uniformed service population place the most value of career development with OJT.

### **B. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The education requirements seem acceptable based on the responses of the sampled acquisition workforce. There does appear to be a bias by the majority of the acquisition workforce against online training modules. Although resident options already exist for many courses, perhaps mobile training teams could be developed



that could take selected training courses to areas or regions based on requests from the PEOs or on a cyclic basis. This would allow an in-classroom experience without disrupting the predominant civilian workforce that is unaccustomed to frequent lengthy separation from the home station.

The responses from the survey suggest that specific career-enhancing experiences rate as some of the most valuable toward personal development. As mentioned by several senior leaders during our interviews, leadership and mentorship is at the core of our acquisition workforce development. Leaders must take an active interest in ensuring that employees are afforded the opportunity for personal growth by serving in different employment positions. By actively rotating individual duties within the acquisition office, employees gain experiences that they themselves perceive as valuable. By implementing a system separate from DAWIA acquisition qualification management system, leaders could more easily implement a cross-leveling of their acquisition workforce that would benefit not just the individual career but the organization as a whole.

### **C. AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

In the past, the military acquisition workforce had been strongly encouraged to dual track—meaning that members should routinely rotate between contracting and PM positions. The current guidance is directed more closely to becoming specialized in one or the other field. A comparative study of dual-track versus single-track approaches could evaluate any measurable gains.

Another area of interest would be a cost–benefit analysis of the feasibility of introducing mandatory entry-level training for DoD civilian employees. As noted in the research, perceptions of inadequate career development do have effects on the morale, commitment, and job satisfaction of employees. Further, by involving DoD civilian employees and military service members in joint training early in their careers, a more collaborative environment may be achieved later as their careers progress.

Lastly, increasing the set number of rotational assignments for civilians may contribute positively to work experiences that would increase their professional development. As reported by all categories, OJT is the most valued method of professional growth, yet only uniformed service members are able to routinely rotate to varying career-developing positions. By incentivizing this civilian employee rotation, the acquisition workforce can increase its competitiveness within its own ranks.



## REFERENCES

10 U.S.C. § 1732 (2013).

Acquisition Management Branch, U.S. Army Human Resources Command. (2013). *Acquisition officer professional development brief*. Unpublished manuscript.

Army Publishing Directorate (APD). (1979). *Attitude and Opinion Survey Program* (Army Regulation 600–46). Retrieved from [http://www.apd.army.mil/pdffiles/r600\\_46.pdf](http://www.apd.army.mil/pdffiles/r600_46.pdf)

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management Policy (ASD[FM&P]). (1996). *Surveys of DoD personnel* (DoD Instruction 1100.13). Retrieved from <http://research.uci.edu/ora/forms/hrpp/DODSurveysofDoDPersonnel.pdf>

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management Policy (ASD[FM&P]) & Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition (USD[A]). (1991). *Reporting management information on DoD military and civilian acquisition personnel and positions* (DoD Instruction 5000.55). Retrieved from <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/500055p.pdf>

Bacon, L. M. (2013, August 5). 110,000 more soldiers could get the ax. *Army Times* Online. Retrieved from <http://www.armytimes.com/article/20130805/NEWS05/308050012/110-000-more-soldiers-could-get-ax>

Becker, G. S. (2008). Human capital. In D. R. Henderson (Ed.), *The concise encyclopedia of economics* (2nd ed.). Retrieved from Library of Economics and Liberty website: <http://www.econlib.org/library/Enc/HumanCapital.html>

Berta, K. (2001). The Defense Acquisition University (DAU): From consortium to consolidation. *Program Manager*, 30(3), 9–10.

Biesecker. (2012). Revised DoD buying guide stresses improved acquisition workforce, new affordability levers. *Defense Daily*, 226(30), 6–7.

Bontis, N. (2009). *The predictive learning impact model*. Retrieved from <http://www.NickBontis.com/BontisPredictiveLearningImpactModel.pdf>

Bontis, N., Hardy, C., & Mattox, J. R. (2011). Diagnosing key drivers of job impact and business results attributable to training at the Defense Acquisition University. *Defense Acquisition Review Journal*, 18(4), 348–367.

Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G., & Williams, J. M. (2008). *The craft of research* (3rd ed.). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Choi, D. I. (2009). *A study on improving defense acquisition through the application of Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) concept to*



- defense industry workforce* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from [http://edocs.nps.edu/npspubs/scholarly/theses/2009/Sep/09Sep\\_Choi\\_Davis.pdf](http://edocs.nps.edu/npspubs/scholarly/theses/2009/Sep/09Sep_Choi_Davis.pdf)
- Couture, N. J. (2009, July). An unprecedented challenge continues. *Contract Management*, 49, 6.
- Dacus, C. L. (2012). Improving acquisition outcomes through simple system technology readiness metrics. *Defense AR Journal*, 19(4), 444–461.
- Defense Acquisition University (DAU). (2006). *DAWIA II continuous learning module* [Slide presentation]. Retrieved from [https://learn.dau.mil/CourseWare/802502\\_3/media/DAWIA%20II.pdf](https://learn.dau.mil/CourseWare/802502_3/media/DAWIA%20II.pdf)
- Defense Acquisition University (DAU). (2013a). Fast facts. Retrieved from <http://www.dau.mil/aboutdau/pages/fastfacts.aspx>
- Defense Acquisition University (DAU). (2013b). History. Retrieved from <http://www.dau.mil/aboutdau/pages/history.aspx>
- Department of Defense (DoD). (2005). *Acquisition career development program manual* (5000.52-M). Washington, DC: Author.
- Deputy Director, Acquisition Career Management (DACM). (2010). *Army supplement to the Department of Defense desk guide for acquisition, technology, and logistics workforce career management*. Retrieved from [http://asc.army.mil/docs/pubs/Army\\_Supplement\\_DOD\\_Desk\\_Guide\\_ALT.pdf](http://asc.army.mil/docs/pubs/Army_Supplement_DOD_Desk_Guide_ALT.pdf)
- Farmer, J. (2012). *Rapid acquisition policy and application* [Materiel Readiness Office slide presentation]. Retrieved from [http://www.acq.osd.mil/log/mr/psm/June\\_2012/23\\_June7\\_Rapid\\_Acquisition\\_Policy\\_and\\_Application\\_PSM\\_Conf\\_2012\\_0607.pdf](http://www.acq.osd.mil/log/mr/psm/June_2012/23_June7_Rapid_Acquisition_Policy_and_Application_PSM_Conf_2012_0607.pdf)
- Fast, W. R. (2009). What ever happened to certification? *Defense Acquisition Research Journal*, 16(1), 3–17.
- Gates, S. M., Keating, E. G., Tysinger, B., Jewell, A. D., Daugherty, L., & Masi, R. (2009). *The Department of the Navy's civilian acquisition workforce: An analysis of recent trends* (TR-555-NAVY VY). Santa Monica, CA: RAND.
- Government Accountability Office (GAO). (2010). *Defense acquisition workforce: DOD's training program demonstrates many attributes of effectiveness, but improvement is needed*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from <http://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo8101>
- Greene, H. J. (2013, July 15). Interview by M. Kaul & B. Wilson [Digital recording]. MBA thesis research project, Naval Postgraduate School, Acquisition Research Program, Monterey, CA.



- Hawkins, R. L., & Granzow, L. (1997). Department of Defense instructional systems design for the acquisition/contracting work force: A view from the inside. *National Contract Management Journal*, 28(1), 1–10.
- Heckman, J. J. (2000). Policies to foster human capital. *Research in Economics*, 54(1), 3–56.
- Hitt, M. A., Biermant, L., Shimizu, K., & Kochhar, R. (2001). Direct and moderating effects of human capital on strategy and performance in professional service firms: A resource-based perspective. *Academy of Management Journal*, 44(1), 13–28.
- Hutton, J. P. (2011). *Acquisition workforce: DOD's efforts to rebuild capacity have shown some progress* (GAO-12-232T). Washington, DC: Government Accountability Office.
- Liebowitz, J. (2004). *Addressing the human capital crisis in the federal government: A knowledge management perspective*. Boston, MA: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Marshall, G. (1998). Human-capital theory. In *A Dictionary of Sociology*. Retrieved from <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1O88-Humancapitaltheory.html>
- Mavroules, N. (1991). Creating a professional acquisition work force. *National Contract Management Journal*, 24(2), 15–23.
- National Archives and Records Administration (NA&RA). (1985). *All about KSAOs: Knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics*. Retrieved from [http://www.travisafrc.com/storage/afm\\_uploads/TAP/All%20About%20KSAOs.pdf](http://www.travisafrc.com/storage/afm_uploads/TAP/All%20About%20KSAOs.pdf)
- Naval Education and Training Command (NAVEDTRA). (2009). *Personnel qualification standard for divisional safety petty officers afloat* (NAVEDTRA 43460-4C). Retrieved from [http://www.public.navy.mil/navsafecen/Documents/afloat/Surface/Md\\_Hz/PQS/PQS\\_Div\\_SafetyPO.pdf](http://www.public.navy.mil/navsafecen/Documents/afloat/Surface/Md_Hz/PQS/PQS_Div_SafetyPO.pdf)
- Naval Postgraduate School (NPS). (2013). GSBPP programs and curricula. Retrieved August 20, 2013, from <http://www.nps.edu/academics/generalcatalog/1741.htm>
- Newman, J. H. (1947). *The idea of the university*. New York, NY: Longmans, Green, and Co.
- Phillips, W. (2013, July 17). Interview by M. Kaul & B. Wilson [Digital recording]. MBA thesis research project, Naval Postgraduate School, Acquisition Research Program, Monterey, CA.





- Pope, J. K. (1997). *Measuring the effect of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act* (Master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School). Retrieved from <http://handle.dtic.mil/100.2/ADA331749>
- Shusko, J. R. (2010, June). *Analysis of the training provided to first-time military acquisition professionals at Marine Corps Systems Command* (Joint Applied Project, Naval Postgraduate School). Retrieved from <http://edocs.nps.edu/npspubs/scholarly/JAP/2010/Jun/10Jun%5FShusko%5FJAP.pdf>
- Shyu, H. (2013, July 15). Interview by M. Kaul & B. Wilson [Digital recording]. MBA thesis research project, Naval Postgraduate School, Acquisition Research Program, Monterey, CA.
- Spisak, C. A. (n.d.). *Department of the Army continuous learning policy and implementation guidelines for acquisition employees and their supervisors*. Retrieved from [http://asc.army.mil/web/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Army-CL-Policy\\_12June2013.pdf](http://asc.army.mil/web/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Army-CL-Policy_12June2013.pdf)
- Tremaine, C. R. L. (2012). Experience catalysts: How they fill the acquisition experience gap for the DoD. *Defense Acquisition Research Journal*, 19(1), 53–74.
- United States Army Acquisition Support Center (USAASC). (2011). *Program manager acquisition qualification standard users guide, draft V2h*. Unpublished manuscript.
- United States Army Acquisition Support Center (USAASC). (2013a). Army Acquisition Center of Excellence (AACoE). Retrieved from <http://asc.army.mil/web/organization/aacoe/>
- United States Army Acquisition Support Center (USAASC). (2013b). Slide presentation at the meeting of the GO/SES 3rd Quarterly Forum, Fort Belvoir, VA.
- United States Army Acquisition Support Center (USAASC). (2013c). CAPPMIS. Retrieved from <https://rda.altess.army.mil/camp/apps/cappmis/modules/home/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.dashBoard>
- Vacante, R. A. (2003). Providing the DoD acquisition, technology and logistics workforce more control over its training. *Logistics Spectrum*, 37(3), 15–18.
- Weigle, R. (2013, July 19). Interview by M. Kaul & B. Wilson [Digital recording]. MBA thesis research project, Naval Postgraduate School, Acquisition Research Program, Monterey, CA.



Wold, H. (Ed.). (1975). *Path models with latent variables: The NIPALS approach* (Reprint ed.). New York, NY: Academic.

Yakovac, J. L. (2013, October 9). Interview by M. Kaul & B. Wilson [Digital recording]. MBA thesis research project, Naval Postgraduate School, Acquisition Research Program, Monterey, CA.





THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



## Appendix A. LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

1. Greene, Harold J., Major General, U.S. Army  
Date: 15 Jul 2013  
Location: Pentagon, Washington, DC  
Deputy for Acquisition and Systems Management (Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology), Washington, DC, Apr 12–Present
2. Greene, Scott, NH-04  
Date: 09 May 2013  
Location: Naval Postgraduate School, CA (VTC)
3. Acquisition Education & Training (AET) Branch Chief Kreider, Stephen, Senior Executive Service-02  
Date: 16 Jul 2013  
Location: Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD  
PEO Intelligence, Electronic Warfare and Sensors, Dec 12–Present
4. Leaphart, John R., Colonel, U.S. Army  
Date: 18 Jul 2013  
Location: Redstone Arsenal, AL  
Program Manager Aircraft Survivability Equipment
5. Management Council, PEO Intelligence, Electronic Warfare and Sensors  
Date: 16 Jul 2013  
Location: Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD
6. Phillips, William N., Lieutenant General, U.S. Army  
Date: 17 Jul 2013  
Location: Washington, DC  
MILDEP/Director, Army Acquisition Corps, ASA-ALT, Present
7. Shyu, Heidi, EX-04  
Date: 15 Jul 2013  
Location: Pentagon, Washington, DC  
United States Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology
8. Spisak, Craig, NH-04  
Date: 09 May 2013  
Location: Naval Postgraduate School, CA  
Director U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center, Direct Reporting Unit to the ASA(ALT)
9. Weiger, Rusty L., Senior Executive Service-02  
Date: 19 Jul 2013  
Location: Redstone Arsenal, AL  
Deputy PEO Aviation, Present



10. Wittstruck, Richard, PhD, NH04  
Date: 16 Jul 2013  
Location: Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD  
Deputy PEO Intelligence, Electronic Warfare and Sensors, Present
11. Yakovac, Joseph L., Jr., Lieutenant General, U.S. Army (Retired)  
Date: 09 Oct 2013  
Location: Naval Postgraduate School  
Military Deputy/Director, Army Acquisition Corps, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology), Nov 03–Nov 06
12. Zurmuehlen, Kevin K., NH04  
Date: 18 Jul 2013  
Location: Redstone Arsenal, AL  
Director Army Acquisition Center of Excellence, Present



## **Appendix B. COPY OF ACTUAL SURVEY**

### **Perceptions of acquisition workforce qualification requirements**

This survey attempts to examine how the workforce "perceives" the effectiveness of certification requirements mandated by the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA). The research is aimed at evaluating which training (Initial Acquisition Basic Course, DAU online modules & resident courses, OJT, ACS, TWI) proves to be the most value-added towards competency in core acquisition skill sets. We also request your opinion (if applicable) as to a potential negative effect realized by the lack of "qualification" beyond certification.

The anticipated benefit from this study is that it will provide a clear picture of current certification measures which can be referenced by future committees chartered to shape the course of evolving acquisition training requirements.

This survey is estimated to take approximately 10 minutes.

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary. Any information obtained in this study will be kept confidential to the full extent permitted by law. Information collected by this survey will be safeguarded and saved on a secure NPS server.

If you have any questions or comments about the research while taking part in this study please contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Dina Shatnawi at [dshatnaw@nps.edu](mailto:dshatnaw@nps.edu). Questions about your rights as a research subject or any other concerns may be addressed to the NPS Institutional Review Board Chair, Dr. Larry Shattuck at [lgshattu@nps.edu](mailto:lgshattu@nps.edu).

There are 45 questions in this survey

### **Consent**



**[Q1]**

**Do you consent to this voluntary survey? \***

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

You are invited to participate in a research study entitled "What is the perceived effectiveness of metrics used to assess the Program Management (PM) qualification requirements of the Army Acquisition Workforce, since implementation of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA)?"

The purpose of the research is to identify areas of the Acquisition Certification process that are perceived as a true measure of one's subject matter knowledge or lacking thereof. The anticipated benefits from this study apply to the Acquisition Workforce where a clear picture of perceived current measures may be referenced by future committees chartered to shape the course of evolving Acquisition certification requirements.

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary and anonymous. You will not be penalized in any way or lose any benefits to which you would otherwise be entitled if you choose not to participate in this study.

If you have any questions or comments about the research, or you experience an injury or have questions about any discomforts that you experience while taking part in this study please contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Dina Shatnawi, (831)656-2755, dshatnaw@nps.edu. Questions about your rights as a research subject or any other concerns may be addressed to the Navy Postgraduate School IRB Chair, Dr. Larry Shattuck, 831-656-2473, lgshattu@nps.edu.



## Administrative Data

Admin data

### [Q2]Are you a Military Service Member or a DoD Civilian Employee?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Military Service Member
- ☐ DoD Civilian Employee

### [Q2M]

#### In what year were you commissioned (Officers) or enlisted (NCOs)?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was 'Military Service Member' at question '2 [Q2]' (Are you a Military Service Member or a DoD Civilian Employee?)

Please enter a date:



**[Q2Ma]What is your current rank?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Military Service Member' at question '2 [Q2]' (Are you a Military Service Member or a DoD Civilian Employee?)

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ SSG
- ☐ SFC
- ☐ MSG / 1SG
- ☐ SGM / CSM
- ☐ CPT
- ☐ MAJ
- ☐ LTC
- ☐ COL
- ☐ GO
- ☐ Other



**[Q2C]What is your current paygrade?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'DoD Civilian Employee' at question '2 [Q2]' (Are you a Military Service Member or a DoD Civilian Employee?)

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ GS-5
- ☐ GS-6
- ☐ GS-7
- ☐ GS-8
- ☐ GS-9
- ☐ GS-10
- ☐ GS-11
- ☐ GS-12
- ☐ GS-13
- ☐ GS-14
- ☐ GS-15
- ☐ NH-02
- ☐ NH-03
- ☐ NH-04
- ☐ SES
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Other

**[Q3]What is your gender?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male





**[Q4]What year were you born?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was "Yes" at question "1 [Q1]" ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please enter a date:

**[Q5]What is the highest level of education achieved prior to your first Acquisition assignment?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was "Yes" at question "1 [Q1]" ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ High School Diploma or equivalent
- ☐ partial work towards Associates
- ☐ Associates Degree
- ☐ BS / BA
- ☐ partial work towards Masters
- ☐ Master's Degree
- ☐ partial work towards Doctorates
- ☐ PhD



**[Q5a] In what discipline is your highest degree?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'BS / BA' or 'partial work towards Masters' or 'Master's Degree' or 'partial work towards Doctorates' or 'PhD' at question '8 [Q5]' (What is the highest level of education achieved prior to your first Acquisition assignment?) and Answer was 'BS / BA' or 'partial work towards Masters' or 'Master's Degree' or 'partial work towards Doctorates' or 'PhD' at question '8 [Q5]' (What is the highest level of education achieved prior to your first Acquisition assignment?) and Answer was 'BS / BA' or 'partial work towards Masters' or 'Master's Degree' or 'partial work towards Doctorates' or 'PhD' at question '8 [Q5]' (What is the highest level of education achieved prior to your first Acquisition assignment?) and Answer was 'BS / BA' or 'partial work towards Masters' or 'Master's Degree' or 'partial work towards Doctorates' or 'PhD' at question '8 [Q5]' (What is the highest level of education achieved prior to your first Acquisition assignment?) and Answer was 'BS / BA' or 'partial work towards Masters' or 'Master's Degree' or 'partial work towards Doctorates' or 'PhD' at question '8 [Q5]' (What is the highest level of education achieved prior to your first Acquisition assignment?)

Please choose **only one** of the following:

☐

Engineering & Engineering Technology

☐ Business/Economics

☐ Social Sciences & History

☐ Physical Sciences

☐ Mathematics

☐ Psychology

☐ Education

☐ Health

☐ Visual & Performing Arts

☐ Communications & Journalism

☐ Language & Literature

☐ Biological & Biomedical Sciences

☐ Criminal Justice

☐ Political Science & International Affairs

☐ Other

**[Q6] In what year did you begin working in your first acquisition assignment/position?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please enter a date:



**[Q7] In which career fields are you currently certified? (Please select the highest level attained in each)**

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	No certification	Level I	Level II	Level III
Auditing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Business - Financial Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Business - Cost Estimating	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Contracting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Facilities Engineering	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Industrial and Contract Property Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information Technology	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Life Cycle Logistics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Production, Quality, and Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Program Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Purchasing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
SPRDE - Programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Systems Engineering	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Science & Technology Manager	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
SPRDE - Systems Engineering	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Test and Evaluation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**[Q8] What level of DAWIA certification did you hold after your first two years as a member of the Acquisition Workforce?**

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Level I
- ☐ Level II
- ☐ Level III



**[Q9] With what ACF (Acquisition Career Field) do you most identify yourself?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Auditing
- ☐ Business - Financial Management
- ☐ Business - Cost Estimating
- ☐ Contracting
- ☐ Facilities Engineering
- ☐ Industrial and Contract Property Management
- ☐ Information Technology
- ☐ Life Cycle Logistics
- ☐ Production, Quality, and Management
- ☐ Program Management
- ☐ Purchasing
- ☐ SPRDE - Programs Systems Engineering
- ☐ Science & Technology Manager
- ☐ SPRDE - Systems Engineering
- ☐ Test and Evaluation



**[Q10]How many separate Acquisition assignments have you held?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9
- ☐ 10
- ☐ 11
- ☐ 12
- ☐ 13
- ☐ 14
- ☐ 15
- ☐ 16
- ☐ 17
- ☐ 18
- ☐ 19
- ☐ 20
- ☐ 21
- ☐ 22
- ☐ 23
- ☐ 24
- ☐ 25
- ☐ 26
- ☐ 27
- ☐ 28
- ☐ 29
- ☐ 30



**[Q11]**

**Did you have acquisition experience prior to your first acquisition assignment?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

**[Q11a]If yes, please explain what type of experience and the duration?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '15 [Q11]' ( Did you have acquisition experience prior to your first acquisition assignment? )

Please write your answer here:

**[Q12]Did you take any DAU courses prior to your first acquisition assignment/position?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No



**[Q12a] If yes, for what purpose?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '17 [Q12]' (Did you take any DAU courses prior to your first acquisition assignment/position?)

Please write your answer here:

**[Q13] As a member of the Acquisition workforce, have you served in an assignment(s) that did not qualify as time towards DAWIA Certification?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose **only one** of the following:

☐ Yes

☐ No



**[Q13a] If yes, please explain.**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '19 [Q13]' (As a member of the Acquisition workforce, have you served in an assignment(s) that did not qualify as time towards DAWIA Certification?)

Please write your answer here:

**[Q14] Have you utilized any of the listed programs or events to further your training or certification?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose **all** that apply:

- ☐ Advanced Civil Schooling (ACS)
- ☐ Training With Industry (TWI)
- ☐ Active membership in PMI (Program Management Institute)
- ☐ Developmental Assignment
- ☐ None
- ☐ Other:

**[Q15] Have you always achieved the 80 Continuous Learning Points (CLP) requirement per every 2-year period since joining the Acquisition workforce?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No





**[Q15a] If not, how often have you not met this requirement?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'No' at question '22 [Q15]' (Have you always achieved the 80 Continuous Learning Points (CLP) requirement per every 2-year period since joining the Acquisition workforce? )

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ 10%
- ☐ 20%
- ☐ 30%
- ☐ 40%
- ☐ 50%
- ☐ 60%
- ☐ 70%
- ☐ 80%
- ☐ 90% of the time
- ☐ Other

**[Q16] What source or points contributed most toward your last achievement of the 80 CLP requirement?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

If you choose 'Other,' please also specify your choice in the accompanying text field.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Academic Courses
- ☐ Training Courses/Modules
- ☐ Professional Activities: (Professional Licenses, Symposium/Conference-presentations/participation)
- ☐ Rotational Assignments
- ☐ Other



**[Q17]How valuable is fulfilling the CLP requirement versus your time invested?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Very valuable
- ☐ Valuable
- ☐ Somewhat valuable
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat not valuable
- ☐ Not valuable
- ☐ Complete waste of time



## Perception of core competencies / skill sets

Perceptions

### [Q18]Rate the importance of the following skill sets towards success in your Acquisition Career Field:

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Very valuable	Valuable	Somewhat valuable	Neutral
Cost Analysis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financial Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Earned Value Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Performance based Logistics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Contracting (Planning, Execution, and Management)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Risk Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Test & Evaluation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality Assurance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Software Acquisition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Depot Operations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Configuration Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Systems Acquisition Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information Systems Acquisition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Program Management Tools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Statement of Work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lean Six Sigma	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
People Skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
PPBE & POM	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



**[Q19]List necessary skills you believe are valuable but were not identified in the previous question.**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please write your answer here:

**[Q20]How did you complete your initial acquisition training?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Acquisition Basic Course (Huntsville)
- ☐ Naval Postgraduate School
- ☐ DAU (online and/or resident) course work
- ☐ Internship
- ☐ Other, please specify in comments

Make a comment on your choice here:



**[Q21]**

**My source of initial acquisition training:**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Was an efficient method of training.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Was an effective method of training.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Challenged me intellectually.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provided me all or most of the tools I needed in my first acquisition job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



**[Q22]**

**I believe the following required modules of each listed DAU category are valuable to my job performance as an Aquisition Professional.**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I don't know
Core Certification Standards (required for DAWIA certification)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unique position training standards (i.e. International Acquisition, centrally- selected positions, or acquisition key billets)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Core-plus developmental guide (desired training, education, experience based on a specific assignment description)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



**[Q23]What source of knowledge do you consider the most valuable in contribution towards success in your acquisition career?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Entry Acquisition level Training
- ☐ On-the-job Training (OJT)
- ☐ DAU online modules
- ☐ DAU resident courses
- ☐ Training with Industry (TWI)
- ☐ Gov't funded College degree/Advanced degree or Advanced Civil Schooling (ACS)
- ☐ Conferences
- ☐ Internship
- ☐ Other



**[Q24] Please rate how valuable the following have been towards success in your acquisition career.**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Very valuable	Valuable	Somewhat valuable	Neutral	Somewhat not valuable	Not valuable	Complete waste of time
Acquisition related conferences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
On-the-job training (OJT)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Defense Acquisition University (DAU) training (online modules)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Defense Acquisition University (DAU) training (resident courses)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Training with Industry (TWI)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advanced Civil Schooling (ACS)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entry level acquisition training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>





**[Q25] Achieving DAWIA \_\_\_\_\_ through completion of the "training" portion of requirements (DAU modules), provides sufficient technical knowledge to successfully perform in a job that only requires this level of certification.**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Level I	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Level II	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Level III	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**[Q26]**

**Based on your answers to the previous questions, can you think of new or better option for improving technical knowledge to meet the DAWIA training requirement?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**[Q26a] If yes, please provide your suggestion(s) here.**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '34 [Q26]' ( Based on your answers to the previous questions, can you think of new or better option for improving technical knowledge to meet the DAWIA training requirement? )

Please write your answer here:



**[Q27]Your supervisor is flexible with your work schedule to allow online certification training opportunities during normal work hours?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Not applicable

**[Q28]While working on a program or a program IPT, have you ever perceived an underlying "team" deficiency in a particular Acquisition skill set which severely impacted the success or hindered the progress of that program or project?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No



**[Q28a] If yes, what skill sets?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was "Yes" at question "37 [Q28]" (While working on a program or a program IPT, have you ever perceived an underlying "team" deficiency in a particular Acquisition skill set which severely impacted the success or hindered the progress of that program or project?)

Please write your answer here:

**[Q28b]**

**Due to this "team" deficiency of an Acquisition skill set(s) you observed a decrease in your organization's collective:**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was "Yes" at question "37 [Q28]" (While working on a program or a program IPT, have you ever perceived an underlying "team" deficiency in a particular Acquisition skill set which severely impacted the success or hindered the progress of that program or project?)

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not applicable
job satisfaction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
organizational commitment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
motivation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
feelings (sense) of competence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
impressions (perceptions, sense) of competence relative to those in private sector	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



**[Q29] Resulting from a perceived deficiency in YOUR OWN Acquisition skill set(s), you personally have felt a decrease in YOUR:**

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was "Yes" at question "1 [Q1]" ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not applicable
job satisfaction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
organizational commitment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
motivation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
feelings (sense) of competence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
impressions (perceptions, sense) of competence relative to those in private sector	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**[Q30] How long should a DAWIA certification be valid, even when achieving continuous learning points?**

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was "Yes" at question "1 [Q1]" ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ 1 year
- ☐ 2 years
- ☐ 3 years
- ☐ 4 years
- ☐ 5 years
- ☐ 6 years
- ☐ 7 years
- ☐ 8 years
- ☐ Other



**[Q31]How much benefit/value would mandating a refresher course for DAWIA recertification after a set number of years (as identified in the previous question) contribute to the collective Acquisition workforce?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Very valuable
- ☐ Valuable
- ☐ Somewhat valuable
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat not valuable
- ☐ Not valuable
- ☐ Complete waste of time

**[Q32]How much benefit/value would mandating a current/relevant experience requirement for DAWIA recertification after a set number of years, contribute to the collective Acquisition workforce?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ☐ Very valuable
- ☐ Valuable
- ☐ Somewhat valuable
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat not valuable
- ☐ Not valuable
- ☐ Complete waste of time



**[Q33]Would a qualification monitoring system separate from the DAWIA certification process to track an individual's actual acquisition experiences (i.e. participation on a source selection board, test and evaluation event, brief to the Milestone Decision Authority (MDA), etc...) assist in improving the overall quality of the acquisition workforce?**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please choose **only one** of the following:

☐ Yes

☐ No

**[Q34]Final Question. Please comment on any aspect, recommendation or issue with the acquisition certification process (i.e. DAU training, Education, Experience) you feel should be addressed by future requirements committees.**

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was 'Yes' at question '1 [Q1]' ( Do you consent to this voluntary survey? )

Please write your answer here:



THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



## Appendix C. RESPONDENT REMARKS (FINAL QUESTION)

### Business—Cost Estimating

#1: DAU training should not be so easy to pass. Too much concentration on group work, which lets way too many people pass a class that they have no clue about.

#2: No written documentation of on-the-job training required for certification.

#3: Online coursework is a waste of time -- I see too many people cheating amongst themselves to pass, and learning nothing in the process.

These certifications have merely turned into a barrier that everyone hurdles over without actually gaining any knowledge in the process.

If the training was more rigorous, and there were actual repercussions (no promotions, being fired, etc.), maybe people would take it more seriously.

Consider that there is a difference between the materiel developer of actual weapon systems and the modeling & simulation communities. Many of the topics covered for DAU certification apply to a full/real weapon or communications system. Although much of the same rigor applies to M&S training systems, there are some differences which are rarely addressed in the coursework.

First, the DAU training is valuable and provides a good basic understanding of the acquisition process. However, every office is different, so on the job training proves to be the best source of education. Also, I find it a waste of time to collect CLPs, just for the sake of collecting them. Most folks don't even attend events or training that will actually improve their skills...but take classes just to collect the points.

I know I am sounding very negative about the certification process, I feel that most of the formal training I have received over the past 30 some odd years was a complete waste of time. However, I have formed some strong relationships with some of the people that I came into contact with in the courses and these people have provided me with some of my most valuable insights into how the acquisition system really works and how to work around some of those problems. The acquisition system is currently setup to ensure that the simplest of task is arduous and time consuming with the maximum amount of frustration. If you really want to teach new people the necessary skills to be able to do their job then design training classes that relate to the specific services way of doing business and peopled with trainers that have real life experiences within that services organization and culture.

The biggest hindrance for new people is learning the “vocabulary” of their organization and their specific way of doing business. This is where OJT is so critical and in most cases the person that is perceived within the organization as the least valuable to the organization becomes the trainer of the “new employee”.

Requiring 80 CLPs in 2 years has become a meaningless exercise to check the block instead of keeping current or refreshing knowledge/skills. Many DAU courses are a





complete waste of time that could be completed successfully by someone off the street. Rarely, do DAU courses provide information that is actually useful to my job.
The extensive DAU Certification process and coursework has been very successful in training the Acquisition Workforce. It is an amazing commitment to the DoD workforce that has paid off with high quality professionals. Perhaps some level of training should continue in the Program Management "shops" so advances and direct application can be documented reflecting all important elements of learning (e.g., Mentoring, Communications, Team Building, Leadership skills, Technical prowess, etc.)
Typically the classes are unrelated to the actual worked performed and therefore, not useful.
A lot of my folks have problems getting the classes. It is very frustrating to them and puts pressure on them that should not have.
Acquiring the right training, the right skills, at the right time is important to be successful in any career. Each person has varying degree of learning though for the most part, there is a core or notional pattern within a career, sometimes accidental or deliberate. Initial acquisition training proves useful to expose acquisition professionals; however, there needs to be continuous training and persistent mentoring to sustain success. Refresher courses are helpful but the content of the course has to be relevant.
As a Program Analyst, DAU courses required for DAIWA certification should be tailored to the position held; for ex: Earned Value Management is not something I use nor did the majority of classmates use for the position they held.
As an FM, I am seeing a division of workload that is causing Budget Analysts to be taken out of the acquisition process. This has caused several of my employee's difficulty with two classes. As an ACAT 3 Project Office, EVM has very little value as a training requirement, most of our contracts are too small to require EVM reporting. This should be assignment specific training.
Between DAU certifications, other career certifications, and mandatory training, we already are over loaded with training; especially while under furlough.
Budget analysts should not be coded as acquisition positions. 99 percent of the acquisition training does not apply to my job and is a complete waste of time and taxpayers money!
Centrally manage DAU/DAIWA certifications at the DA level. Do not allow supervisors in the field to influence or determine a given employees certification status.
Certification should be awarded once the coursework has been completed rather than identifying a Time in Service in order to achieve. and/or collectively include the person's total time in the program albeit CTR or CIV
Classroom training is great for the beginner in the Acquisition field but once those requirements have been met and the employee is familiar with the Acquisition process then there is no substitute for the value you receive with On the Job Training and Rotational Assignments.
DAU is a waste of time!
DAU training is unrealistic to actual duties performed. So adding dictator like teachers who cannot teach, the classes become a waste of time and simply provided added stress and less time to devote to actual work.
DAWIA certifications have been in place for a number of years, but the DoD still gets slammed on every program being not delivered on cost, on schedule and with



performance issues. In other words all that DAWIA training has done little to improve the way DoD does contracting. Personally, I think that the DAU training to every acquisition position should be stopped immediately. The acquisition professionals responsible for the continuing debacle, Program Managers, need to have more intense and comprehensive acquisition training prior to being allowed into those positions.

Deleting the required mandatory 80 hours of CLP's

Provide more refresher training courses

Completed some DAU courses before they were on line and would like to just review them because things have changed but I would have to complete the whole online training.

Don't want to.

Education and Training does not make a competent employee or leader. Having the ability to leader and provide directions "REAL Direction" is what is needed. Not just simple attending training for training.

I am beginning to think this survey is taking place because you want refresher certification courses. We are already certified, let us do our job. Especially with furlough, GFEBs, and not enough work days to get things done as it is. Recertification is not going to improve our skills at all. We did our qualification requirements which did not help on the job at all. Anything new for our job we learn on the job.

I am disappointed with the certification time requirements and the fact that your time cannot overlap. I have been in a PM shop for 7 years. As a co-op for 2 and in an Acq position for 5 years and I have a year of education. I was on a 3 year intern plan for GS7-12. I am level 2 in both PM and Bus Fin Mgmt. Now that I am off of the intern plan and received a merit based promotion to GS-13 I cannot meet my current certification level III requirement because I do not have the time required. The only way to meet my required level III in Bus Fin Mgmt is to give up my level II in Program Management. I have done nothing but finance in a program management office. Why does this time not count towards both certifications? If I give up the PM level II and then change jobs I may never be able to get it back. If I don't give up the PM II then I do not meet my current required level. I think time should be double counted if the work performed matches both criteria. Especially in Program Management.

I believe that the Certifications are too broad in their scope.

I find the acquisition certification courses to be very helpful and supportive for the new and growing acquisition professional. However, it does not successfully educate professionals that are "veterans" in the workforce. In that case, the courses seem to offer strong focus on ACAT I level documents, issues, and concerns. Very few acquisition professionals get to support at such a high visibility program, so the classwork becomes a paper drill and little is learned. I recommend special acquisition training be offered/required based on the acquisition category program the professional is supporting. Most acquisition professional become knowledgeable through experience their tenure brings, and consorting with other acquisition professionals at professional conferences and symposiums. I find that we learn very much from one another rather than DAU training textbooks. I also believe formal higher education should be encouraged and funded in fields other than business. Very little of acquisition career field is like private industry business. A degree in public administration/public policy with various specialties should be encouraged because their



core is non-profit or (federal) government focused which is totally different perspective.
I think Financial positions should require classes geared more toward Finance to keep certification/knowledge current.
I'd like to see more refresher courses. I've had my certification since 2000 - terms and processes have changed a lot since then.
In general, I believe it is beneficial to demand a training standard. However, it adds a lot of workplace pressure and takes a lot of time to accomplish and often does not provide benefits to match the overall cost. I have had excellent training and learned about background material that gives me a better big picture of the Army budget process, but in fact it does not help me do my actual job better.
It is often difficult to relate course work to the real work world - especially when some required courses are not part of daily job duties. I think there should be more (credited) training opportunities within each department so that it is easier to make a connection with relevant concepts and procedures. For example, some offices only have ACAT II or III programs, not ACAT I. So, it would be nice to have an emphasis on the rules of engagement for these type of programs. Sometimes it backfires to give TOO MUCH big picture information, for newer employees. It's nice to know what everyone else is doing, but you need to understand your own job really well FIRST.
It's absolutely ridiculous how you set up "meeting requirements" to being certified. First of all, the courses themselves. Some of those courses have nothing to do with what I do, nor will it ever. Do you have any clue why the failure rate for EVM 201 is so high, apparently you don't care, but I'll tell you anyway. EVM 201 has nothing to do with my career field. If it's not in someone's field, they're success rate in that class is greatly reduced. You should pay attention to who's in cost and who is not in cost.
Also, I completed my Level I courses within a year, but had to wait 2 years until I could be certified. I completed my Level II courses within 36 months (required), but cannot certify until I have 48 months in field. Fine and dandy. But you need to make those sync up. Don't ding me for completing the requirement, but not having the time in. That's your fault for having 2 separate requirements for one certification. And when I asked about this, of course I received the typical runaround answer. I don't have a problem waiting the 4 years. What I have a problem with is you telling me that I have not met requirements of being Level II certified when I have. I shouldn't have to get a waiver for your clerical errors. I applied for my Level II as I'm supposed to. Was denied. Appealed. Was denied. Due to time not served in the field. Then a month later I get an email basically stating, why haven't you certified? It's ridiculous.
Just let it be known that when an individual has to get their levels in certification, the amount of time does not coincide with to get their certifications at the end of their training. I believe that the timing of the completion of training and the time in the position should coincide with one another so that upon completion of final course the individual can get their certification for the level achieved.
Level One should be a bit more comprehensive across the entire discipline base.
Majority of the training received will never be used in the workforce.
Make Budget/Finance its own individual certification. Remove the Cost and EVM portions as Financial analysts do not perform these functions and they are a total waste of time.
Most all of the student I met in required to receive certification ALL find the courses as



poorly written and the course writers are out of touch with the reality of the students. It's a tremendous waste of time and measuring the student's competency of the class does not work. You hear very little in the courses that you can use on at the office. EVM is too long and BCF is too long. (*Name Deleted) the BCF teacher/developer of the course has the most pompous attitude of all the instructors I've ever seen. Her attitude in my class was one of "You should know this and I'm not entertaining your questions." Some people go to these classes to learn not to recap what we are "suppose" to already know. It was one of the most unpleasant experiences of my life and I could not wait to leave that class.
Need more rotational assignments.
Once certified should be grandfathered for life not recertification. And there are too many waivers given to employees who do not have a college degree.
Requiring a re-certification process would help to ensure acquisition workforce personnel are given the time to actually train and refresh their skill set.
See previous comments. Need to take the stress out of the classroom testing, It's ridiculous and unnecessary and doesn't allow the student to fully learn the course material.
Stop creating "gotcha" questions on DAU online exams. The workforce is very frustrated by the online course experience as a whole and we feel like DAU wants its students to fail.
The ability to convert education into ability and knowledge is sorely lacking due to a failure in the many levels of management to include personnel into growth assignments, in and out of the office, that would employ some of the advanced skill being learned. I.e. If a person cannot be part of an EV team in the office, but had to take it as part of level II BFM, the skill is lost and the funding used to increase the skill level is wasted.
The course material is sometimes not relevant to the job descriptions/duties.
The DAU courses would be fine if they were used on the job and most importantly if the tests were not present as a pass/fail grades. The main goal for 90% of the people is passing the class only. The real concept should be gaining new knowledge and applying it to your work afterwards even if it is not present in your current job. This puts a lot of stress on individuals starting on day 1 because tests. It's unfortunate, but most people go to classes with no job experience of the subject matter. (I.e. EVM when programs at their locations are not A CAT 1 programs so the basic knowledge coming into the class is not there). Last, is when Instructors tell you that you should already have proficient knowledge of the subject before coming into class. If you don't do this in your job, how can this be done?
The experience should mirror up with the time you have to receive your certification. Example, Level III in BCF requires 6 years of acquisition experience but you are required to obtain level 3 certification within 24 months of being hired in this position.
There needs to be a greater validation of training requirements to what skills the employee actually needs to perform their job. The current cookie-cutter style of training requirements is a tremendous drain on finances with little to show for actual benefits in the field.
Training in acquisition is important but certification gives academics the impression that they have created great workers which is false. There are too many people with certifications that can't do the job. Also, the certification requirements change which gives the impression of creating job security for DAU. Rarely do academic exercises reflect the real world of acquisition. All acquisition training does is give a background and



understanding of the process but it means nothing until you actually work in the field.
We are told the CLPs for mandatory training cannot count towards our 80 CLPs required every two years. We were told the purpose of the CLPs were to help us in our field. BOTTOM LINE--there are not enough courses in our certification areas. We are wasting taxpayer dollars and missing time from the position to check a block.
We don't need any more mandatory training requirements. We have PLENTY in the Army already. Probably too many.
While I think refresher training would be a good idea, it may be hard to implement if it's a specified course. However, changing the 80 CLP requirements to ensure a set number of CLPs must be fulfilled from a certain "RELEVANT" course list would help.

## Contracting

If you have 80% average then you don't make it through one section you should be able just to retake that section. Not repeat the entire class. Also, it was not suggested to me that the online classes would help to prepare me for the 5 week class. If any of my comments are not applicable please dismiss them. It is a confusing process to differentiate between the classes taught by DAU vs. contractor taught classes. I attended a contractor taught 5 week class.
1) One problem with DAU training is that it largely forgotten unless it is immediately and directly applicable to the current mission so that classroom work is reinforce with field work. It would be impossible to schedule the exact right class at the exact right time and keep on any kind of certification time line. This is a weakness of the DAU-based certification model.
2) No DAU class has been more than mildly difficult. Perhaps we should have the DAU training, but also have to sit for an examination similar to the BAR that lawyers have to. Passing the BAR doesn't mean a lawyer knows everything he needs to be successful in his career, but it does mean that he has a good grasp of the basics and is a respected credentialing process for a career field that is very similar. Really, if one graduates Law School without passing the BAR exam one has an almost useless degree.
In any event, we've largely gone past the grandfathering needed to implement DAWIA certification, it wouldn't be bad if it were harder to achieve/more meaningful/more respected.
52 weeks minus holidays, vacation days, sick days, Mandatory training (no CLPS), teaming events, leaves less than 44 weeks
While training may make jobs for certain organizations in DoD, it detracts from overall productivity.
A test of one's overall contracting knowledge should be given before each certification.
Address the issue of experience and related growth opportunity. Support efforts to ensure and/or ensure opportunity for maximizing experience/growth exists for each employee in their career field.
Again, need better instructors, not just someone that wants everyone to know how smart they are. I see and hear students talk about this all the time. Also, with the lack of





adequate personnel that are willing to work, the work gets delegated to someone that will work, and this person gets burned out quicker. Most supervisors have not done a CRP in so long, they do not have a clue as to how long it takes to round the "cats" up to produce a sufficient CRP.
application of training in a practice environment
Army should start all Acquisition Officer from LT rank such as AF and Navy, by the time we are Major or LTC we had behind our AF and Navy counterparts, v/r
Believe the certification process is most beneficial. With so many policy and guidance changes, need continual interpretation from both school house and leadership.
Better enforcement of *RELEVANT* experience prior to certification by the services. Many acquisition professionals gets certified even though they have not actually worked in the certification area. If one works in an operations section doing no actual acquisition work, it should not count toward certification.
Better instructors...fun and interactive (like the GFEBS instructors)
Allow for any college degree, an educated employee is valuable no matter what field. I am paying thousands out of pocket because I study political science which the Acquisition Program won't fund. I was hired because my work and work ethic speaks for itself. There are certain characteristics an employee either has or does not have and will never have you have to look for those special characteristics when hiring because no training will equip them with good, ethical right behavior. Train your managers to have a keen eye for that.
Certification of individuals is great, but let's face the facts. Individuals will only get better with doing different jobs. If you can't get experiences, but you can get time and DAU classes, then you get certified. This hurts the organization. If you also put a requirement to do the jobs, then what about those officers that get roped into serving on Staff (a complete waste of time and talent I might add), what happens to them. They may lose a certification. Most officers come into the acquisition field to set themselves up for success after the Army, but will stay longer if the job is rewarding. You are going to lose a lot of good officers here really soon because you are making way to many battalion, brigade commands and with that staff. I for one do not want to do staff work. I want to lead organizations and do contracting. I want to move on from simple buys and do complex long term contracts. This is where I started when I was allowed to contract in a PM shop as a new 51c. If you don't let me go back and do more of this, you will lose me and many more like me who are burned out doing staff work or who are stuck doing Base Ops type of contracting.
DAU TRAINING NEEDS TO HAPPEN AFTER THE EMPLOYEE IS SEASONED NOT AT THE BEGINNING WHEN YOU HAVE NO CLUE WHAT THEY ARE TALKING ABOUT!
Denying warrants to BOB personnel purely based on position is the wrong answer.
Eliminate non-value added mandatory training programs such as Lean Six Sigma. It is a waste of valuable resources in an economic environment where we are forced to do "more with less" while being furloughed.
First, I think we need to hire good people...don't let underperforming Soldiers to transition to the Acquisition Community. To the extent possible, we should interview Soldiers to see if they have the mental capacity to grasp our concepts and bring value to the organization.
Fix the Army NCO Accreditation/Certification process. We are wasting valuable time and



money on sending people to DAU schools when the standards eventually change due changing DAU standards.
For military professionals we are not adequately trained to be Acquisition professionals. Take for instance the Army Acquisition Basic Course, the course is two months long attempting to cover over 20 years of learning.
For the military personnel, the completion of certifications is in direct competition with military tasks and the progress of improving contract skills.
For the most part CLP's are a waste of time. They are used by management to cut training cost and keep employees at their desks. The perception seems to be that employees should use their own time to complete courses that increasingly have less and less to do with their jobs. They are perceived as adding no value when it comes to preferable job assignments, promotions, etc. All management wants to know is that employees complete the required training so they don't have to hear about it from their supervisor.
I am Level III certified and find it very difficult to take DAU classroom courses because I do not qualify as a result of prerequisites which have changed between Level II and III qualifications. If a person has a Level III certification they should be able to take a Level III course and not be rejected because they don't have a Level II prerequisite. It's very difficult to get into classes once Level III has been accomplished.
I believe future requirements committee should address a balance between DAU residence training, on the job training, proficiency testing, and recertification based on actual acquisition positions held within a specific timeframe.
I believe in the military acquisition workforce there should be a submission requirement prior to warranting for all ranks. There should be a requirement to submit experience in such categories as it pertain to that organization prior to receiving a warrant.
I believe leadership courses need to be injected from Level I forward as part of education. I realize there are CES courses but I believe these concepts could be combined. There also needs to be more interactive learning. Level I is core concepts but there is still use in taking information learned and trying to critically think through scenarios. DAU is a great venue but I believe there needs to be more thought on testing to ensure the student is actively engaged and is learning the concepts rather than ctrl finding the answers to pass. Also recommend an avenue for students taking the same online classes to "chat" and help each other as some students may find cost, for example, difficult but could use a teaming environment to assist.
I believe that the issue is not so much with the acquisition workforce as it is with those who work constantly with the acquisition workforce not being adequately trained and held to the same professional standards as those within the acquisition workforce. Also, we could really do the acquisition workforce a favor by making revolutionary changes to the acquisition process and the statutes, regulations, directives, and policies that sustain our prehistoric ecosystem.
I believe the best training is on-site whereby a student can ask questions, and learn from fellow students.
I do not believe all agencies within DoD handle this the same. For example, the contracting interns at PEO STRI are told that the Army will not pay for their graduate degree while in the intern program. I do not believe this is in any reg or meets the spirit of growing future leaders and doers for DoD.
I feel there should be longer time allowed between levels 2 and 3 to allow for a higher



level of experience prior to achieving Level 3.
I think that there should be a refresher course that summarizes the acquisition process from beginning to ending.
I think that if you implement more training, then you must allow your people to take the time off to go to it. If management expects you can do both jobs, then I think you are asking for resistance. Most people have too much to do in a day to expect to do training too, even during mandatory training weeks. I think training should be held off site, but in the local area where workers can focus on training and get it done.
If DAU training was more challenging and if they were allowed to fail 25-30% if necessary it might be valuable. But when it is dumbed down to the lowest common denominator it is almost useless. We have people completing their level III education to whom I would never consider issuing a warrant. Level III should not be easily achievable by all it should be challenging.
If you are doing the job and have taken the classes and certification there is no point in re taking or refreshing. That is just a waste of time and money. I think every organization should be responsible for keeping their employees optimized by providing rotation opportunities to keep the employees on their feet with new contracts, promotion opportunities, temporary assignments, source selection opportunities and not just a few chosen favorite ones. It is critical that everyone gets their fingers wet on a continuous basis. Sitting in a DAU class for 2 weeks away from home will not achieve this result. Every post and contracting facility should own this responsibility to maintain a motivated workforce and make opportunities available.
Improvements can only be made if the people are willing to seize the opportunities and management is willing to give the workforce the time. Also the initial classes need to be more rigorous to set the tone and a good foundation of expectations. If the decision is to track peoples experience e.g. participation on a source selection board, test and evaluation event, brief to the Milestone Decision Authority (MDA), etc...) then the people should have to ability to choose those assignments without management withholding the opportunities for the few they favor.
Interns spend too much time in non-specific generic classes when time should be utilized in the real work environment. Hundreds of hours, give the organizations a break especially when they already hold Masters degrees in contracting.
It really doesn't matter within ACC Warren if you have the certification/training. Promotions are based on favoritism and good ole boy network.
Just an attempt to try and give the Soldiers or civilians as much hands on experience as possible and actually tie that experience together with computer applications.
Leadership engagement/oversight on the certification process would assist/validate the credibility of the certification request submitted by acquisition workforce.
Level III contracting is extremely broad, in that a variety of experience counts (pre-award, CAS, policy, construction). Perhaps a way of focusing the certification would be helpful.
Maintain DAU only accreditation versus outside credit and accreditation towards a DAWIA.
Military (especially enlisted) cannot control assignments or workload thus create limits or boundaries on their acquisition experience, exposure, and capability to master their craft. In my opinion it undermines DAWIA courses taught and intent because military may never get a chance to work in those areas (i.e. cost price, construction, etc.). Until we get rid of





these boundaries, we will continue to limit the career field.
More direct courses on specific functional skills that are only available at major commands would be helpful. For instance, someone who is in a base level support contracting facility would benefit from construction/SAP specific courses, while a MACOM contract specialist would benefit from more source selection specific information.
Nice survey and I do hope whoever it is for gets a good grade on this project towards their Master's degree but none of this is going to change anything. Thanks for the thought provoking questions either way.
No Soldiers should be sent to CSBs prior to a year or two of actual contracting.
Once an individual has attained the certification level and continue to work as Acquisition profession to maintain his or her experience then I hope it should be maintain the same status as attributed to professions like nursing.
Once you sit at a desk and work a program, you only solve the problems present for that program/phase of the acquisition cycle. If The Powers That Be require, for example, source selection experience when no source selections are available to participate in strikes me as a problem waiting to happen.
Also, I started my career working program/buying supplies. I now buy services. Maybe course work specific to developing PWS's for performance based services would be valuable. All these courses depend on the class, the instructor, and the students.
Personality, experiences and individual temperament count more towards workforce quality than an overarching baseline virtual course requirement that can never take into account the variety of needs we have across the force. I have met level III civilians that could not contract their way out of a paper bag; conversely, I have met those at level 0, which could contract circles around others. DAWIA is a good rule of thumb, minimum requirement, but is not, and can never be a catchall fix for workforce quality.
Personally I have experienced difficulty with online classes. The help desk provided no help. The recorded message ended with a disconnection, no live help. In today's environment, on-site training has suffered. I prefer real classroom setting as opposed to on line training. Also we get no credit for mandatory training.
Please create a uniform initial entry level training standard. This action will prepare an equal understanding and knowledge base for new employees.
Previous training and job experience should be sufficient for DAU certification from other Govt Services, and there should not be any time restrictions -- education DOES NOT expire. Also, it is extremely frustrating in trying to complete Level certifications when the requirements change each year. Due to changes in FY13, I was not able to complete my Level I and II course requirements by the deadline required for my job series/grade. Fortunately I have an understanding supervisor who is aware of all the complications I've encountered in getting certified. I've also heard that there will be more changes in FY14, so I have no idea when I will be able to complete my Levels if additional classes are suddenly required...It seems to be a never-ending process for me, and great job security for DAU employees!
Professional Certification should be done based on education and exam, not merely completion of course work. Acquisition Certification should follow the same model as the Certified Public Accounting Exam.
Recertification in a discipline would not be necessary after a fixed number of years,



provided the person continually worked in that field. However, if there were a gap in working in the field, the certification should be renewed after about 4 years. The most frustrating aspect of certification is the ever-changing standards; in the last 8 years the standards have changed at least twice, forcing coworkers to start over again. In my experience, officers are not given enough OJT to learn their craft--they are placed into management too soon, they need more hands-on experience
Recertification testing/training is a great idea since some who are in the career field might have been certified 10 years ago but policy has changed and they have not kept up.
Recommend AMSC Leadership course(s) be required. We have civilians (with limited contracting experience and with ZERO Leadership education/training) in high level leadership and supervisory positions throughout the Army and they couldn't lead a horse to water much less a high performing team to successfully accomplish a mission.
Recommend the aforementioned tracking of personnel serving on a SEB, etc.....again OJT is the best learning available.....most learn by doing not being told about it. The govt could also save some money by not wasting time on needless classes that most do not remember anyway.
Require the applicant for Level III to demonstrate that they hold the requisite knowledge through completion of an oral board and written test.
Speaking for DAWIA Contracting certification only (re: Experience): 24 months experience for Level II and 48 months for Level III DAWIA certification in contracting is a fallacy. It takes 10 years to grow a good, competent, seasoned contracting officer. I have no issues with the training requirements; DAU does an excellent job both resident and on-line.
Stop changing the certification requirements.
Stop trying to change it. Leave it be. It is no wonder we are in the budget crisis we are in when organizations like DAU continue to change certification standards, requiring more classes, requiring more TDY to attend the classes. Stick with what we have now and leave it alone for 5 years or so and re-evaluate.
Supervisors and managers should hold personnel accountable. This would negate the need for a 'system' to track an individual to maintain a level of training/CLPs. The supervisor should know who is competent and who is not, who needs training and who does not. Why provide a crutch to lean on?? Quite honestly, most folks simply complete their CLPs because they must comply, not for training or knowledge. Empower supervisors and managers with the ability to train or request training for their subordinates if/when/as they need it, not because the subordinate must achieve a certain number or CLPs.
Sustain the resident courses, fix the initial entry training to be job specific.
The 80 hr per 2-year cycle is very annoying and is misinterpreted by agencies. Some say "40 hrs per year", some say 80 hrs per 2-years (differing agencies are on alternating biannual schedules), and some have even broken it further out to say "10 hrs per quarter". This has got to stop. It needs to be formalized as 80 hrs per 2-year, with consistent years based on a DAU schedule (i.e. 2012-2013 is one cycle, 2014-2015 the next). If a person takes one course worth 36 hrs and an online course for the remaining 4 in the base year, that should cover the need for that period. If the person takes 3 courses totaling 108 hrs in one year, then they should not need to attend one the next year.
The Army is currently looking into a system that would track each person's activities and accomplishments so this information could follow the acquisition person throughout their



career. Great Idea.
The certification process is problematic during sequestration when our command will not less us apply to any courses other than CE. The Level III CE courses were booked for the entire FY 2014 within a month of the new dates being released.
The Civilian workforce perception of the Military workforce is hindering the learning experience required to improve the competence of the overall workforce. The Military personnel also need to get some training in organization management throughout the perspective offices. We do not have to be in charge but get the experience in with policy and decision making within the "Contracting" offices.
The experience qualifications should be based upon accomplishing certain types of activities instead of just generic credit based upon any related assignment.
The fact that you must have two years' experience before you can attend AICC hurts some in the workforce. If you have a graduate school degree before entering the AQ field you can waive a year of experience to gain the next level of certification. But in order to gain the next level of certification you need the training. The rule inhibits those who can certify early from doing so.
The focus on completing the DAU certification requirements alone does not make competent acquisition professionals. The work experience/OJT is required. Many of the DAU courses mean nothing until you actually can apply them. They are a waste of time if you cannot apply them and be measured against their application.
The inconsistency with civilian and military certification approvals. Several civilians are able to double dip their certifications (I've witnessed this nearly a half dozen times), while military members are held to a higher standard and limited to the position they hold. While I do not mind being held to a higher standard, allowing the civilian workforce experience a different standard defeats the purpose of the DAWIA policy all together and artificially inflates the qualifications of several civilians on their resumes.
Additionally, I would recommend DAU investigate using an E-Connect online portal for training vice resident courses. The same objectives could be accomplished without the cost burden of travel expenses. Several large universities use this and employ their full curriculum to include group work and oral presentations via the web, why shouldn't DAU?
The issue is supervisor's allowing the person to attend DAU training. If your supervisor isn't proficiency trained why would they allow you to be more or welled trained then them.
The issue with requiring people to go to refresher courses is the inability to get a seat in resident courses. If this is being considered DAU the courses should be online.
The level and value of experience received during an initial acquisition assignment is heavily dependent on the organization. Unfortunately, the level of experience is not equal at every organization. We must "fix" the organizations that are lacking or be more strategic in where we send new acquisition personnel.
The mandated 35 Proficiency Task require for level 1 certification should be extended for at least two years to give the people time to be proficient and learn from the OJT before they take those test.
The number of courses has increased since I was certified but it certainly isn't producing a knowledge workforce. I have to be honest, when I started this career field I was trained by a very knowledgeable workforce. We lost some of these people due to educational requirements that were mandated in the 90s and some through retirement. I am thankful



that I was trained by these seasoned, knowledgeable professionals and I feel for the workforce coming in because straight classroom training with no seasoned workforce to provide OJT has just degraded this career field. I am so glad I am not starting my career but am on the tail end of it!
The online training is helpful as are the degree requirements. However, job experience should be the determining factor in the certification of Soldiers. Those who are certified but cannot perform only hinder those in the acquisition workforce.
The only real way to measure competency is with a standardized test that is difficult to cheat on. Recommend a timed, proctored, open book, online exam that tests knowledge and writing skills.
The required online DAU certification training should be more relevant to the type of contracting being done
There are too many people receiving certification without having the requisite experience. The training is only a part of the equation. This is a problem in the active duty military members as well. They are given responsibility and certification is granted based upon training and their military experience. This is causing a problem not only when they are active duty but when they leave the military and are hired as 1102s. They think they are qualified, but they are not.
There has to be a continuous learning attitude/ approach after the completion of Level III. Maybe implement a level IV and V as something for the senior Contract Specialists/Officers
There is only so many slots to attend a course, if recertification is required, and there is no increase in resources there will be a problem.
There should be more levels of certification. An acquisition professional could go from Level 0 to Level III in 4 years and remain that way for the next 30-40 years. Obviously, continuous learning would occur and experience would evolve, but all of the training and certification is geared towards entry to low-mid-grade employees. There needs to be additional levels dedicated to senior and executive-level employees (whether they are currently there or aspiring).
There should be more opportunities for developmental assignments.
There should be more slots available for entry into some of the classes/programs.
Too many crossover jobs with improper title. i.e., Life Cycle Logistics does not include job titles such as COR, Trusted Agent, Financial Contract Management etc. There is not a proper CAS2 evaluation process when the work cannot be identified, and the group you are supporting may not be part of your rating.
Training needs significant improvement for the Army. Selection for the Acquisition needs to improve, we keep selecting personnel that are not top performers and then they are non-select and dismiss from the Army, a complete waste of money and time. Certification requirements change every year, it is like DAU cannot be satisfy, it is like they have no idea what is it that they want/expect/lack of innovation and vision for this as a profession. Learn from the Medical Professions and Lawyers. Make it a real profession and not a game that lacks of training, education and experience.
TWI needs to be expanded, either through more billets available or through more private industry.
We already have too many tracking and monitoring systems in place. We have CAPPMIS to track our IDP and our CLPs. Adding new monitoring systems to track relevant



experience is redundant. If that is to be tracked, simply track it in CAPPMIS. We need to stop being so focused on metrics like years of relevant experience and adding class after class or changing classes constantly. Instead, we need to take subjective looks at every individual and determine if they are truly "cutting it" as an acquisition professional. Putting all acquisition professionals in a one year probationary status and then having them go before a re-accession board is a positive step to ensure our personnel are actively engaged in learning their craft as quickly as possible and to ensure that the acquisition corps retains only the best qualified, not just qualified, personnel.

You have two people that have completed all the course need to obtain level 1 certification, but one doesn't have a BS degree. So one is certified and the other is accredited. Then the requirements for Level 1 change before the one can get their BS degree. So now, the change effects the one with the accreditation but not the certified one. Why is that? Does the BS degree make you a better contracting specialist then the one without? Once a person has taken all the courses for a certain Level, any changes after that should not affect that person.

You should only receive enough training to be level one then OJT for a year then back to school for level two and back to OJT for a year, so on and so on....

## Information Technology

- DAU resident training has proven excellent. Non-resident courses seem to be a waste of time and a paper drill.

Acq. level 1- Status quo it is the basics that is fine for entry level and basic understanding of what to learn. Software Acquisition piece is a bit dated and does not need to be nearly as long.

Acq. level 2- Further work the firebird project give students a better understanding of IPT's, group work, and acquisition process on the whole for large scale projects/programs.

Acq. Level 2.5(B) - Based on the Parent program the employee works for and their primary focus not just large scale acquisitions. This last class structure should be with other employees of similar organizational sizes. Whether they are in contracting, Program Manager, IT or logistics is secondary. Organization size, mission and goals are dictating the focus.

I spent 5 weeks with very little value added to what my programs mission does on a daily basis for the DOD. All emphasis currently with DAU is solely on large scale weapon/software programs and acquisitions. In a government that is currently shifting funding dynamics towards lower cost, buying smarter, and better product utilization.

Why would we only focus on the large scale projects and the bureaucratic red tape that comes with it? You don't become a more agile and leaner fiscally by putting out products that take 25 years to refine and produce.

Teaching new acquisition individuals placed in classes based on their PEO mission objectives large or small program/job title. Bring in facilitators with requisite experience to





relate to the students. Add that to OJT and training with industry would be more beneficial to my current position than just having large scale defense programs regurgitated for weeks at a time.

Level 3- Now focus on classes pertaining specifically towards acquisition large and small based on the individuals job classification. Concentration on what duties would be covered under that classification.

Class length- Utilize Video teaching and interactivity techniques in conjunction with the current DAU online courses, rather than spending money for employee's to travel TDY. Trim the fat there were quite a few classes that did not need to be included based on relevance, lack of updated teaching materials and personnel. Shorter more pertinent classes that could be utilized online would mean Acquisition certification would be less expensive and shorter in duration to receive.

As an IT worker, I find myself not very involved in actual acquisition activities. What I do is important to my PEO, I am not highly involved in the actual system/product acquisition process. I am not exactly sure, based on my experience, how relevant my particular position is to acquisition. I don't have to be acquisition certified to keep servers and applications running.

Completing courses just to get 80 CLPs is a waste of time, money and effort

Experience should be given for like or related work as an 1102... To obtain Level II one must have two years as a sitting 1102!

I feel that the DAU courses are very worthwhile. However, in my position I don't do any acquisition related work. I am a network administrator. If I don't go out and seek another position (not really any in this geographical area) my acquisition skills along with time and money will be wasted.

I think we spend too much time worrying about achieving CLP compliance. If you're doing your job and performing Acquisition work, why is it necessary to do this "extra work" to prove you are certified to do acquisition work?

If you keep using the team concept in DAU training - participation is everything, demonstrated learning of new material is minimized, and the answer is always, "It Depends"; then we will continue to have individuals attaining to very modest understanding of acquisition. Please don't misunderstand - DAU is very valuable; most especially in getting an individual to Level 2 Certification, but level three Certifying should require more than participation, it should require a demonstrated active understanding of acquisition.

If you only focus on jobs that are Acq specific, you leave a range of others that do security, networking, etc. I think more classes need to be offered that focus on these particular skill sets. Most of the classes I've had to take have nothing to do with my job.

It doesn't matter how much acquisition training one takes as the politics of the government won't allow for effective implementation of what is being taught. Just because we feel that we are teaching the proper way to do something doesn't mean that the government actually works that way. The false sense that we are getting better is a joke. All the training in the past across the services hasn't stopped the fraud, waste and abuse of the politicians or PMs waiting for the next promotion. True training is exemplified by true leadership. Were in the midst of a furlough. What does that tell you?



Keep opportunities available to all of the workforce.
Many work in Acquisition everyday (myself included)- experience is not an issue. I acknowledge some attain the certification and have little work related experience.
My DAU training was a complete waste of my time. I cannot think of any course that I took that actually applied to the work that I do.
Need mentorship!
Nobody can recite the entire horse blanket, which is why it exists.
Poor quality personnel will always screw things up, regardless of how much training >I< receive and regardless of how much training >THEY< receive. Find a way to weed them out instead of penalizing the rest of the AWF.
QUALITY personnel keep current by actually using the FAR and actually using the acquisition process - and need no silly/redundant/Wasteful re-training.
Acquisition certifications are virtual boxes to check with almost zero real world value.
Q33: To give acquisition personnel the ability to gain experience with facets of acquisition events would be an excellent way to implement the training.
Recertification would be a poor use of my time, op-tempo of current work would prevent me from gaining any value. Only so many people can participate in some work required in acq. There is no way possible to have every person in an organization participate in all aspects of AQC (only leadership will brief MDA)
There is VERY little taught about the lifecycle of a program AFTER MDA, How to keep a program healthy and functioning needs to be addressed.
Should create standards and expected completion of DAWIA certifications WRT a person's annual evaluation. If they have not completed DAU training within 2 years of hiring, it should reflect negatively on annual evaluations.
Sitting in another class to recertify would be of no value unless the person has not worked in that field for some given period of time. If a person has worked continuously in their career field and continues to maintain the 80 CLPs then they should be automatically recertified with no action needed on their part.
Stop the training requirements if money, politics, and personalities are going to continue to drive the train. At the end of the day all people care about is getting the job done - all the training in the world will not help when money, politics, and personalities continue to rule over process, procedure, and mandates!
The acquisition certification process covers all life cycle phases in the same amount of detail. I think there should be an emphasis (detail coverage) only in the phase(s) of your current acquisition assignment, including prospective phase(s) in the near term. This would break the acquisition certification process (thereby optimizing it) into different areas of interests for each acquisition career field.
The DAU concept is a great idea however it suffers from the same issues that most corporate training systems suffer from: low commitment. If there was real commitment to raise the education/experience/effectiveness of the Acq Workforce and that was going to be done through training then let's make that happen through effective trainings and cut the 'faux-interactive' flash movies, the endless web courses that are impossible to retain



and the 2 week excursions where everybody passes and few retain. Hire real instructors, educators and content developers to build an educational system with merit that people 'need' to attend to learn and grow, not to justify some arbitrary requirement.
The process is level set, and does not consider extensive experience and knowledge persons may have prior to being assigned to an acquisition position. The equivalency process is more time-consuming than just taking the courses. Maybe fix that aspect of the certification process?
The validation and verification process for DAWIA certification is less than optimal. I along with several other were delayed in getting DAWIA Level III due to "lack of experience"; however, several of us had more experience than most. It was identified that several military duties did not qualify as ACQ yet a large portion of the duties and responsibilities were ACQ. In other cases the validation is at the approver's discretion. For example: Four prior military, recently DoD Contractors were hired on in ACQ positions. Three were granted DAWIA Level III based on prior experience. The fourth (which had the most experience of all) was denied due to lack of required ACQ experience. There is a clear lack of consistency in certification and validation requirements.
There should be somewhat of a catalog system that will tie certifications to the MAPL. This could help generate a career road map for acquisition professionals (to include developmental assignments) and organizations.
Too many chances are given to those who fail a DAU course for certification. We have now given an individual a tutor and given an individual several chances. Individual has failed numerous classes. Failing more than one should be reason enough to tell the person to find another job. That is what a contractor would be told. Why baby the gov't employees?
Upgrade the training to match future environments.
We don't need a separate System to Track performance, DAU does a great job.
While I am part of acquisition based on the overall effort, I have nothing to do with procurement, programming, testing or other until it gets to the field and I support those fielded systems at the units with the War Fighter. Most of this training is good only for background of how the systems were supposed to have been developed and for the networking with those in the development area. My job has more to do with the sustainment and monitoring of fielded systems which is not covered much. I'd love to have the developers and PMs get a dose of what is experienced by field support once they put those systems out with the units.

## Life-Cycle Logistics

Acquisition certification process is the beginning of the learning process, even for those reaching level III. If an individual is going to be a performer then they have to invest in themselves. Forcing individuals to go to additional classes will not make them any better and there is no return on investment for this. It's all about what people put into it and their level of personal accountability and pride. If the individual is not learning on their own and developing their tool box of lessons learned they will not improve or get to the level of production desired. Spoon feeding people only convolutes the system and puts low
--





performers at position where they will not or cannot perform to standard.
Acquisition managers should not be allowed to hire personnel that have not meet the acquisition level required for the position being hired.
Acquisition recertification after 5 years would allow old timers the ability to attend the new or redesigned training.
All Military Services and Agency should have the same criteria for issuing a certification. Several of the services implement the certification approval process different. Need to standardize.
Assignment to source selection boards, rotational assignments or other things mentions in the previous questions are determined by your supervisor. If your supervisor does not sponsor you in your quest for new experiences then it will not happen. I think these assignments should be centrally controlled.
Being a young leader it was very difficult getting into certain classes to meet acquisition certification requirements especially that were not in your particular career field. I feel that ultimately stovepipes your possible potential to learn other focus area's technical attributes. Being well educated in multiple disciplines is much better than an expert in just one or even two.
Certification process may need to be applied with a concentration on a specific area and tracked. They don't rotate us to gain experience in other areas so we are never a complete logistician unless we are exposed to all areas. If tracked an acquisition project/effort could capitalize on those "concentration" areas within the pool of logisticians at hand to support different aspects of a program. This avoids one or two being singled out to support efforts because the rest never gets called to support programs.
DAU courses are too general and don't tie closely enough to the actual "How To" do the job, so they tend to be viewed as little value added. Problem with certification requirements is that you can take a class and learn the material, but if you haven't had the opportunity to use the information - it loses its value.
DAU exposes the individual to the initial workings of the fields. It is with experience that you become proficient in the position.
DAU is a valuable resource for certification, obviously. However, along any field's certification path, there are measurable redundancies in the content of the on-line and resident courses. The infrastructure required to support DAU could be measurably reduced if the information taught in acquisition courses were not "re-taught" in subsequent, higher level courses.
DAU online courses are nice but in my experience sitting at your desk with all the distractors it seems to be about check the block versus actually learning. Additionally when you are taking a course that has 60 slides per module what actually benefit do you think we are obtaining, I hate to say it but you just forward to the next slide. Too much info.
DAU training is good stuff. ...but the PM can tailor their actions which alters the intent of the Regs. This creates problems down the road but (s)he is long gone by them and leaves the mess for someone else to manage. Developing a 360* eval would bubble some of those issues to the top and help the next PM get a head start.
DAU training is valuable to all Army acquisition staff members.
Even though training is very important, it should not interfere with the job requirements. We are often forced to attend briefings or meetings we don't need or want just to get CLPs, and that's not the right way to get training. Training should be relevant.



Experience needs to be viewed as having more value than it does.
Good idea for refresher courses and think that would greatly increase the knowledge level and competence of the workforce. Probably should work and study different segments of Acquisition, Logistics and Contracting before entering a position to understand the complete picture of how the entire system works.
I agree with the last few questions. Though I feel DAU certifications at a Joint level and not a service level leave areas of improvement, government civilians who have been "grand fathered" into Level III certification based on legacy training. Earlier Level III training was like two weeks years ago... leave a disparity between skillsets of government civilians. Re-certification is a good thing
I believe that certifications should be renewed after a certain period, however, there should be more developmental assignments offered to gain experience in different areas to hone in on the skills that an individual is weaker in.
I feel that the current system is out of touch with reality and therefore provides little correlation between Certification Level and on the job competence. As addressed in the previous question...a system that monitored actual relevant experience post certification would be a good tool.
I feel the questions asked in the survey provide a good cross section of questions for the committee to consider
I would like to get certifications in other areas but cannot since I am not able to work in the respective discipline to gain Level III
Logisticians work at different levels during the procurement of systems/products, and as the required documentation changes (LCSPs, Concept Plans, and Transition Plans), logisticians should receive training in how to successfully prepare and submit these documents to higher headquarters.
Many modules are old and need to be updated (CLL018 was made in 2003), Honorable Heidi Shyu (ASA ALT) is changing Logistics daily; she has outdated modules you need to keep up with. PBUSE + Better Buying Power are just two.
Most core acquisition members would agree that continued education in the craft is vital in the environment of change and emerging technology. The problem is not the need to attend training, but the opportunity and time to train given the massive amount of responsibility assigned to a weapon system. Acquisition members not assigned a weapon system is more available to attend the various training opportunities. In most cases, this become a time management decision. In most cases, training normally become last to the mission in meeting Milestones, fielding decision or events that might have adverse impact on the overall mission.
Need to do more training out in the off-site locations to assist our junior folks get trained and certified.
On Q33 - monitoring does nothing, so why track it. Web based training only allows throughput so we can meet an artificial goal of 100% "certification". If you are really serious about tradecraft, efficient program management and delivering the best product for the best price, you need to devote more time to training that is hands on, qualification and results based and allows interaction with other students to share experiences.
Other than core-plus modules, most core DAU training seems to be aimed at training everyone to become a PM. As a new employee, training for a position (PM) that may occur several years down the road is a waste of time that could be better spent with OJT



focused on the current assigned position. But that is just my opinion.
Personnel with irrelevant college degrees (Arts, Political Science) tend to find themselves in the acquisition career field by default. After completing a short two year internship with on the job training they are subjected to mindless on-line courses which have little to no value because of their career track, for an example Tech Writers are required to learn Life Cycle logistics when they are not Logisticians. These personnel have no substantial concept of acquisition operations yet their pay grade is equivalent to logisticians with the same training. Training a Tech Writer in life cycle acquisition is a crude waste of tax payer dollars when they have little to know involvement in the acquisition process. The tech writer should have their own certification track.
Providing refresher course in every 5 years, even if you're level III certified
Refreshers are good but feels as if you are taking the same course over again. As stated earlier training with the industry and rotational assignments gives you a different perspective on what you have learned. A database with access to courses previously taken would help expand your knowledge. I for one research the AT&L website and use Ask the Professor when I need clarification. I try to pass the site on to others for their use.
Some people don't test well it's of their nature, but it doesn't mean that I can't do the job of a Level III or don't deserve it. I am doing Level II plus work and deserve my level III
Stop trick questions on nonresident exams.
Stop trying to teach BCA & Independent Logistics Assessment, and tell OSD that they should send out independent teams to PMs to ensure these processes are truly neutral. If PEOs/PMs pay for these documents, they expect them to say what they want them to say, probably status quo.
The interaction with the actual program various phase will keep you abreast.
The last step in our professional education system is totally broken. Once individuals are selected to SSC or the fellowship, the Army must "place" them in follow on positions. Many qualified individuals refuse to apply for SSC for this reason and I am one. I have personally seen several people on Redstone Arsenal be selected, they cannot return to previous position and cannot find a GS15 or NH04 position open.
There is far too much politics (favoritism) in who gets "the right job" to qualify for the "check the block" position. There should be an impartial acquisition assignments office supervising this career field. That office would ensure ACQ professionals are trained and fairly positioned to benefit the government, the organization and the individual.
Upon final completion of any level of certification, consider application of skill by assessing actual performance capability. Application of skill set cannot realistically be measured because there is no accurate finite means of determining whether the skill set can be applied through the workforce. Understanding that each region, installation or work place varies, perhaps there can be a means to standardize expectation of performance.
We really need to look at the requirements for Acquisition Corp membership. There are a lot of veterans in the work force who do meet the Bachelor degree requirement and we are losing a very experienced, trained and dedicated workforce due to this requirement. I have veteran's working for me who are more qualified than other employees with Master Degrees, but they have no chance of being promoted since they do not belong to the Acquisition Corp. This folks have 20 plus years hands on experience and we really need to look out how this contributes to the Acquisition workforce. Take the Acquisition Corp membership requirement back to an Associate's degree.



You can be level three certified in Life Cycle Logistics and not know Logistics! Major Problem!

## Production, Quality, and Management

Add certifications for some specialty subsets of current certifications. I.e. sub-class to PQM for welding, or Engineering for Survivability.

All of the Certifications in the world are worthless if the people don't follow the Acquisition Principals that are taught and learned for Certification. That is exactly what I've experienced to date. How business is actually done vs. how business is supposed to be done wrt the Acquisition Principals is completely different. The Current Acquisition Certification is just a "check the Box" exercise because they aren't practiced.

Our processes need to be refined to reduce un-needed analysis, reports, reviews and editing. Let us focus upon best practices for all of plethora of tasks that we have defined as being important. We spend 30% of all DoD money on the "spin" cycle. We can do better.

Refresher courses could be good, but certification shouldn't hinge upon those classes. I say this because if you're in the ACQ workforce, you're dealing with a lot of that knowledge base on a daily basis. You do get a lot of reinforcement in regards to OJT through just being in the workplace.

The acquisition process itself has become too cumbersome and should be streamlined. Training people to become even more bureaucratic does not help. There should be standards of training needed to maintain certification, i.e., a certain number of related CLPs or such over a timeframe (like most professional licensing processes). The current classes are very helpful but the tests often focus on minutiae so that you find yourself trying to figure out what arcane bit of knowledge the exam will contain instead of learning the material. Also, SME should review all math questions in the Level I and II classes - many of them are not technically correct.

The recertification process would ensure that personnel stayed current with updated process, techniques and other relevant information for each career field. Times change and so should the certification process.

The Training organization itself (DAU) should never become a self-serving agency and more important than the training itself. More is not necessarily better, it's just more, more time and more cost.

Training does no good if there is no follow-up with organizational support and leadership

Add certifications for some specialty subsets of current certifications. I.e. sub-class to PQM for welding, or Engineering for Survivability.

All of the Certifications in the world are worthless if the people don't follow the Acquisition Principals that are taught and learned for Certification. That is exactly what I've experienced to date. How business is actually done vs. how business is supposed to be done wrt the Acquisition Principals is completely different. The Current Acquisition Certification is just a "check the Box" exercise because they aren't practiced.

Our processes need to be refined to reduce un-needed analysis, reports, reviews and editing. Let us focus upon best practices for all of plethora of tasks that we have defined as being important. We spend 30% of all DoD money on the "spin" cycle. We can do better.



Refresher courses could be good, but certification shouldn't hinge upon those classes. I say this because if you're in the ACQ workforce, you're dealing with a lot of that knowledge base on a daily basis. You do get a lot of reinforcement in regards to OJT through just being in the workplace.
The acquisition process itself has become too cumbersome and should be streamlined. Training people to become even more bureaucratic does not help. There should be standards of training needed to maintain certification, i.e., a certain number of related CLPs or such over a timeframe (like most professional licensing processes). The current classes are very helpful but the tests often focus on minutiae so that you find yourself trying to figure out what arcane bit of knowledge the exam will contain instead of learning the material. Also, SME should review all math questions in the Level I and II classes - many of them are not technically correct.
The recertification process would ensure that personnel stayed current with updated process, techniques and other relevant information for each career field. Times change and so should the certification process.
The Training organization itself (DAU) should never become a self-serving agency and more important than the training itself. More is not necessarily better, it's just more, more time and more cost.
Training does no good if there is no follow-up with organizational support and leadership

## Program Management

- Retrain/DAU cert all "grandfathered" Acq professionals.
- Provide more opportunities to experience other key (selection committees, etc.) to everyone qualified instead of selecting the same personnel over and over.
1) The value of 'recertification' processes will vary depending on the audience; particularly, whether they are still in a specific DAWIA certified position or not. The longer the duration out of a particular DAWIA-certified position, the greater value a refresher course may be to the individual to remain current. However, the 'refresher' course must be centered on relevant scenario-based practical exercises and some combination of written, oral, and 'hands-on' proficiency examination.
2) A more streamlined system to accredit OJT and relevant military education towards acquisition educational requirements, and secondarily towards DAWIA certifications would improve overall efficiency and effectiveness of the Acq Corps.
3) Inclusion of the Requirements and Capabilities Management positions to the Acq Corps as part of one or more existing specializations or its own new sub-field should be a consideration.
1. A 100% review of all MAPLs must be done to code them properly.
2. Bring 51T back as that is important in our business.
3. Add more time before a level of certification is obtained. The basic course and 1 year in AAC is not sufficient for Level 1...same with other levels.





<p>4. Do not count time in Army operational schools toward "time in AAC" for certs.</p> <p>5. Potentially a Level 4 certification would be the pinnacle obtained after many years in a field. This could also be the level that can be lost without recertification.</p> <p>6. Where does an acquisition professional have to prove their understanding beyond a test for a course?</p> <p>7. If we are going to be required to "Re-Green" or do "developmental" assignments, then we need to rethink the time acquisition officers are assessed. Earlier assessment would allow more time to spend in the Army Acquisition Corps AND in the regular Army assignments as well. I know the MILDEP wants folks to come in after company command; however, I think thought should be given to coming in after being a platoon leader, particularly if we require more time in AAC positions to gain certification.</p>
<p>1. Create "schoolhouse for acquisition"</p>
<p>2. Make certain jobs branch qualifying for Majors and LTCs</p>
<p>1. Establish (more) opportunities for Acquisition professionals to earn their PhD from a reputable institution.</p> <p>2. Open more ACF certification areas to the military beyond the four that are open now.</p> <p>3. Ensure clearer guidelines for ACF certification options for ALL military acquisition positions.</p>
<p>A fundamental issue that affects performance of Acquisition teams is that individuals are thrown into programs and expected to execute without having developed the basic foundation through "apprenticeships" on other programs where they can observe and learn "what right looks like". Our system for developing the Experience component of qualification is deficient.</p>
<p>A means to track a person's experience and identifying essential/important tasks performed will help qualify a person's competency making it readily apparent in the hiring process or individual development.</p>
<p>A periodic re-certification would ensure the workforce is current on updated policies and procedures.</p>
<p>A routine VTC for newly assessed acquisition officers could provide a wealth of value added.</p>
<p>A significant percentage of acquisition programs are not ACAT 1 and that fact needs to be accounted for in DAWIA training.</p>
<p>A stricter application of eligible CLPs. I should not get CLPs for non-acquisition activities. For those not in a bonafide acquisition position, the certification should expire.</p>
<p>A weakness is experience certification is based on acceptance from ACM, which may not have necessary skills to assess the experience.</p>
<p>Academic education in acquisition is important to achieve an initial certification or capability. After that is achieved it is much more productive to design a series of experiences to increase an individual's expertise. The theory of the life cycle model that I</p>



was exposed to in the mid 70's has changed dozens of times to what we have now and we still can't get new programs through the system. New leadership at DoD comes in and moves blocks around on the chart and nothing changes. The problem is not the academic education - it is the soft skill of dealing with people and leadership skills of program office personnel that fields systems. Individual expertise comes through the OJT of getting things through the system that exists instead of academic theory.
Acquisition experience is the best indicator of an individual's ability to conduct meaningful work. Without that experience, the work product is lacking, flawed, and not value added.
Acquisition experience is the best qualifier for certification of the workforce. Time spent in specific jobs should be counted toward multiple disciplines, not just one discipline per time period.
Acquisition Training seems to be focused on ACAT 1 program requirements. Many people work on smaller programs, and material learned at DAU courses have little/no applicability on their careers.
ACS for all employees (Masters), more education and diverse experience would be invaluable to the work force.
Actual experience is one of the most valuable factors, it is important to avoid adding more administrative requirements that detract from the actual job experience time.
Add a clause in acquisition contracts that requires contractors to make available to employees to select DAU online courses that contribute to their understanding of DoD acquisition. This would be a minimum of all 101/102 type classes.
Add PMI certification - either work with the PMI to cross accredit Program Management Level III with PMP, or require (and pay for) PM Level III to get and retain PMP certification.
Additional tracking like the question on acquisition experiences is in my assessment very problematic. Too many parallel tracking and accounting systems provides opportunities for "gaming" of the system and perceptions of unequal treatment. We all need to do our time with education and experience, and as professionals maintain that level of competence. The system can do education and CLP smarter, but it has the general limited intrusion QA of our workforce on the right bearing.
Again, need to force experience before level III. Way too many junior employees obtaining level III certification without a true understanding of Acquisition. You can't learn everything in a classroom. You can't absorb what is taught in Level III courses if you don't have some on the job experience to relate it back to. 3 years' experience should be required PRIOR to attending Level II courses and 8 years of experience should be required PRIOR to attending Level III courses.
Again, similar to question 33, I think it is imperative to have actual experiences in acquisition specific activities to achieve certification or maintain certifications. Simply attending classes or online training lays out high level requirements, but not the how or mechanics to complete the requirement.
Agile Acquisition processes and there variances from DoD 5000 series processes
Closer ties to current content from PM/PEOs, ECCs, MICCs, LLMCs, and others who are executing DAWIA related missions.
All can be difficult to obtain. If there is a time limit to holding the certification then some people with the most important aspect - OJT - may not be certified but are very good at their job. Artificial refreshers - or recertifiers will just add to an already demanding



workload and training requirement.
All DAWIA certification requirements for PM should be taken care of at IQC.
All the training in the world will not help if competent motivated people are not hired and retained. Most people can pass the training but still not have the competency to do a good job.
Allow certification in multiple fields as appropriate. Allow for joint experience credit for appropriate assignments (e.g. NATO or COCOM assignments).
Great survey. I hope to see results in the near future. The acquisition workforce has hollow pockets, based on organizational and leadership resistance. While certifications are being tracked at the highest level, there is much lip service (wink/nod) given to the concepts and directives that are being taught in the classes. Very little ability to use what is learned in the classroom due to entrenched mindsets in Senior Level Leaders.
AMC and DLA have sucked up slots for acquisition civilians when there people rarely touch a program prior to MS C or even fielding. TRADOC works from concept all the way through the life cycle and yet has no civilian acquisition positions. It's completely backwards. Our TRADOC workforce is inept in the way of achievable and affordable requirements generation because so many of them do not understand the impacts of their requirements generation decisions. They lack basic understanding of LCL at a frightenly high level of the food chain - Most GS 14s are completely void of technical knowledge. It's sad.
Any revalidation should be based on stability or lack of stability within that field. If little changes, the certification should be valid longer. Classes and tests need to be more serious for the certification to be valid. Some courses will fail students who do not grasp the concepts but others will not.
AQS will only work if the org has a learning culture and is committed to making it work correctly versus pencil whipping
Army Acquisition Professionals have very different careers and the training is the only thing that keeps us on the same baseline. With this in mind if you work in a career field (PM/IT/Test) and you are level 3, you are using those skills every day. If I am Test Level 3 and working in a PM or Engineering job that does not use my Test L3 expertise, then they should be removed or I should have to take a refresher to keep it. Don't take an IT and PM L3 out of their job for 2 months to recertify them every 3-5 years if they are using those skills daily and performing well. Supervisors should be able to recommend a refresher if the personnel show lack of retention and a freeze on their certification level.
As a PEO CIO I have both PM and IT responsibilities. I am not able to take needed IT classes because I am seen as PM and get waitlisted for the classes and have not been able to take them. I also need the IT class to fulfill required Continuous Learning for my required IA certification. The IT class would fulfill both CL requirements but I'm not able to gain access to these classes. This is not in the best interest of the Army.
As I am a Level III, re-certification would almost seem a waste of time for me HOWEVER, things change and once level III, refresher and outside of primary certification would be relevant. Of course people will be resistant so relevance must be shown.
Going to classes should be coupled with actual work experience, especially at the level II and III. I really don't think folks should get a level III by just going to the Naval Post. School; they need on the job experience. Certifications are good and so is continual/advanced training, but, on line courses are not good for me, I learn much more





in a classroom environment. Plus, it is difficult to get away from our jobs and to get into classes. Overall I like the certifications just believe they should include experience.
I have issue with the gaining of certifications even though the individual was not assigned duties and therefore had little or no experience related to that certification. There should be a segregation of credit for accomplishing the requisite training for a DAWIA certification from those who trained and achieved relevant years of experience. Just being in a PM shop shouldn't make you Test or Engr or PM or Log or etc. certified.
As the budget continues to impact the workforce, opportunities to train will begin to diminish and travel to training will diminish. The as-is system is sufficient. The workforce is about to shrink. Adding additional tracking measures and additional requirements to recertify would add additional strain on the workforce that is focused on accomplishing the mission. Attaining the initial certification and requiring 80CLPs every two years is sufficient to ensure the workforce is maintaining their technical expertise. Prior to making these decisions take into account the strains on the workforce to just accomplish the mission prior to levying additional requirements on their time, requirements that should be accomplished during their "normal" workday, not during their non-work day hours.
Assessing and tracking additional experiences would help to identify across the board personnel with certain skill sets to facilitate support and efforts within the larger organization and the Army
Between Furloughs, holidays, leave, training holidays, MANDATORY Army training and refresher training, stand down days, etc., the mandatory CLP requirement should be re-looked.
Participating and leading product IPTs, actively participating and briefing at Program Management Reviews, participating in relevant conferences, participating in SSEBs, TWIGs, source selection and through day-to-day program execution our acquisition personnel learn more than sitting at a computer for on-line Acquisition Courses that they must take to meet mandatory CLP requirements.
Beyond acquisition specific training, we need refreshers in how the Army runs.
Bottom line-we lack the collection of metrics and the ability to link those metrics with actual performance. Until we do this, we will never know the correct balance. Instead of tracking CLPs and taking DAU on-line courses, there should be a two week course once every 18 months that focuses on case studies to learn important lessons. The courses should be certification level specific and must taught by an acquisition GO/SES.
Bringing in new blood from outside the existing workforce is imperative so making these courses available and allowing industry experience to count for some of the experience requirements would be useful. Some people spend too much time away from their duties to perform training (CONTRACTS in particular). Others can't get advanced management courses during the normal work day because there's too much work to do, let alone go to an on-site class at another location.
Bus & Finance courses need reviewed based on failure rates. Either the material or instruction is not getting through to the students.
Cannot stress enough how the current training is all conceptual and certification should require more structured mentorship as there is no consistent or measurable "standard" for supervision, mentorship and certification of skillset by a superior or mentor.
Certification accreditation for non-primary career field without the requirement for



residence courses.
Residence courses are extremely difficult to attend if not in primary career field.
Certification is no substitute for brainpower. Stupid people certified at Level III are not going to make good products. This obscene fetish with ever-increasing certification requirements is concentrating TOO LATE in the developmental process. It is more important to get QUALITY RAW MATERIAL at the beginning of the process. "Select hard, manage easy. But if you select easy, you have to manage hard".
Certification is not the problem. The AAC workforce is highly educated. The problem is the process and bureaucracy associated with DoD acquisition.
Certification needs holistic based on talent level, past performance, and experiences. Training and courses are a good tool, but are not a good indicator of how well an individual can or will perform in a particular area.
Certification Process is not equal for all function areas. BCF is the hardest for folks to obtain certification and all jobs in that field are alike. Need to relook and break up that discipline some more. ACAT I programs in BCF requirement should be different ACAT III programs and Budget execution types.
Certification process should be enforced DoD wide. Ensure commands have properly funded training.
Certification requirements are NOT a way to distinguish competent members within the Acquisition workforce. Experience is the greatest teacher.
Certification requirements have changed in the past, and signing up for courses to get them out of the way so one can wait for a resident school slot does not achieve an educational flow. There should be an acquisition basic, acquisition intermediate, and acquisition advanced introduced so all get the right training at the right time.
Certifications are important but the necessary training and time away from the job is a hardship to the organization under current hiring freeze and vacancies. 40 hours' worth of continuous training also presents a hardship. The fulfillment package to obtain credit for experience and training takes more time, in many cases, than taking an online course. Some common sense needs to be applied here.
Certifications do not equate to an individual's ability to apply the learned material.
Certifications should be awarded to staff that are not currently Acquisition professionals. We limit our potential work force by not managing aspiring Acquisition professions in CAMP.
Certifications, once achieved, should not expire as long as the member continues to work in the certified field.
Civilians don't have the same opportunities, such as training with industry that military members have.
CLP accumulation does not produce a better Acq Workforce.
CLPs are about quantity not quality. The CAMP/CAPPMIS system needs to be fixed so individuals can't be their own supervisor or have a buddy/peer as a supervisor. The system, when used correctly, can be used effectively.
CLPs are quantity not quality based.
Comment: Currently AT&L workforce experience is measured using, APC and heavily weighted on the individual's resume. Recommendation: incorporate position duty descriptions as a weighted factor for acquisition experience



<p>Comment: Currently non Acquisition personnel are able to apply for Acquisition certification. Recommendation: Adjust AT&amp;L policies to only allow employees not occupying an APC coded position to apply for certification when being considered/nominated for Acquisition position hire</p>
<p>Concern here would be how to monitor - just another level of bureaucracy would not help. How will people get the added experiences; could we end up with a "core" of experienced personnel that prevent others from gaining the training to get ahead?</p>
<p>Concern with such emphasis on training and certification that it becomes a 'check the box' issue rather than the actual knowledge and experience.</p>
<p>Continuous Learning Points (CLP) should "ONLY" pertain to course related material for ACF, no exception.</p>
<p>Core Plus Competency standards have placed a huge burden on the workforce to obtain additional quotas for DAU courses. DAU courses have changed/emerged/retired at such a large pace that another huge burden results on workers to try and stay current with certifications. DAU quality of instruction has gone way down as well -- Many feel the courses they take online are a complete waste of time and effort that also comes at a cost.</p>
<p>Current requirements are fine: Requirements do not equal competence.</p>
<p>DAIWA Certification should be treated like a degree - once you earned it you have it forever. Certification and currency are two entirely different issues.</p>
<p>DAU courses are similar to college courses, long on theory, short of actual relevance.</p>
<p>DAU has continued to add training requirements needed for certification since 2005. At some point, online training becomes of marginal value.</p>
<p>DAU has evolved into a valuable training tool. Certification requirements need to follow the degree path and maintain a certain number of hours, and be focused on the core requirements for that field, rather than simply increasing the requirements every few years.</p>
<p>DAU is a checklist to life approach which focuses on trivial pursuit of acquisition - misses that every action is tailored every program unique. Additionally, certification is starting to cross into performance systems not a desirable effect.</p>
<p>DAU is a very good idea grown completely out of control. Too much emphasis placed on too many, overly long, partially applicable classes. More emphasis should be placed on experiences and exposure to other organizations with potentially better ways of doing business.</p>
<p>DAU is the tail wagging the dog. They're always changing requirements and it's hard to catch up to the certification requirements. On line training is ridiculous at times. Feel like it's a money grab as they constantly move the target.</p>
<p>DAU is too much like a self-licking ice cream cone. Certification requirements are changed way too often with seemingly no valid reason to do so. The Acquisition business is so dynamic that certification, while somewhat helpful, is not as necessary as one might think. Virtually nothing is done by the book to include JCIDS and PPBE.</p>
<p>DAU needs to be more flexible with an individual's previous education/experience when considering certification. For example, I've had an individual who teaches Information Technology/Management have to take the Level 1/2 courses when in fact he could have taught them. Waste of time for him to have to attend these courses.</p>
<p>DAU needs to have better leadership courses. Additional refresher courses that would</p>



update individuals on changes to the acquisition process.
DAU offers tools and an approach to acquisition that aid in successful acquisition efforts. More training would be detrimental as there is already too little time to get the job done with all of the competing professional training and other mandatory training. The best way to learn is by doing the job and sharing lessons learned within the career field.
DAU often changes their requirements. This can require Acquisition professionals to retake courses or take additional courses towards their level X certification if they do not obtain the required number of years for experience prior to the DAU requirement change. This is a fiscal burden on the organization and a time burden on the acquisition professional. DAU should grandfather individuals in to previous year's requirements if members can prove that they obtained all training before the DAU requirement change.
DAU on-line courses were informative but the on-line documents don't translate well as a resource to address questions, issues, or as a research document. DAU on-line or print documents should include an all-inclusive table of contents (by slide number) and an index with slide numbers.
DAU training and certification cannot replace experience from actual practices and learning from the job. Rotational assignment to acquisition position like project lead can better serve to grow the acquisition workforce with actual experience learned from the job.
DAU training is essential, but have to question the value of any course that goes beyond about two weeks. Nothing we do is that demanding to require that kind of commitment. I think the certification process has taken a life of its own. We get certified because we have to maintain the stats, quality is not really valued. I find the ever evolving certification standards maddening. My inability to grandfather prior courses (to include 14 weeks in the PM course!) appears to be a jobs program for DAU - we have to keep churning through on a regular basis re-attending old subject course because our prior courses have "expired." Lastly, too many positions get certification credit when not really doing the work. For instance, AMC or ASAALT staff members earning PM (or SPRDE, or Acquisition Logistics, etc.) certification when never spending a day in a PM shop torpedoes the credibility of the entire process.
DAU training is important, but it cannot be the default fix for systemic deficiencies. While most DAU training is valuable, some is lacking. OJT is always the more effective default option, with DAU training supplement.
DAU training is pointless. The entire goal, as reinforced by high-level officers and members of the SES, is to pass the test with the minimal effort required. The course material is poorly written; I would recommend that DAU get with academia in successful MBA programs and revamp the entire training. DAU training is a "check the block" learning environment. Do not believe that any acquisition employee (DAC or Mil) takes care to go through the learning as presently constructed. Again, I have heard senior acquisition leaders say the "goal is to pass the test" and spend as little time as possible on the training.
DAU training is valuable. The PMT course attempts to pull it all together but is a rushed exercise. Tracing/tracking a simpler program from inception to fielding, through ALL the component parts, with explanatory materials, would give a better "feel" for the task and mission.
DAWIA certifications need to be transferrable to civilian/industry equivalents. Tracking individual experiences would not provide a sufficient benefit vs. the cost incurred.



Refresher training / revalidation of certifications is required.
Depending on the type of acquisition related assignment, retraining or recertification might be necessary. However, at some point in time (i.e. 4-5 yrs.) everyone should redo some of the training due to advancements/changes in the field.
De-centralize certification process at the organizational level by interview or testing.
Disagree with the requirement to have an evaluation in addition to course completion to qualify for the next certification level. If an individual has completed the prerequisite course(s) and has met the educational criteria, he/she should be receive approval for the next level of certification.
Do not tie certification levels to types of degrees earned. Ensure OJT opportunities are offered at all times. Train specific skills prior to specific assignments, e.g. 401 for PM, etc.
due to workloads and limited hiring abilities, more on-line training would be beneficial
Each acquisition professional are engaged in various stages of the acquisition process and therefore may not be engaged in MS decisions, SSEB, T&E or other areas as indicated in the previous questions. Some acquisition professionals are in the sustainment phase of the life cycle and perform a different role. Tracking progress through "another" database would not improve the overall quality of acquisition professionals.
Enforce the standards already established. Plus:  No certification = no position.  CLP goals not met = lose certification.  Unfortunately, it comes down to leadership, effective management, and enforcement.  No specific acquisition skills. Coming from the Army and a combat branch we focus a lot on teaching leadership. Technical skills will come with specific training, OJT, and force management. I believe effectively applying all the basic leadership skills reinforced as a 2LT in the Basic are applicable no matter what career field. Specifically, critical thinking and leading during uncertainty.
Establish and implement rotational assignments and track for DoD Civilians on the Program Management Career Path.
Expand opportunities for ACS to broadening experiences towards program management.
Experience and allowing the workforce to migrate from program to program in the different acquisition phases. Recording and reporting the experience in the ACRB
Experience can never be substituted. The existing certification process is fine, however, there should be some emphasis on job rotation so that the individual can acquire the full breathe of experience to go along with the classroom experience.
Experience is the best education. I cannot think of one thing taught in a DAU course that I use in my job today.
Experience is worth its weight in gold
Experience must take place within 6 months of training or training benefit fades quickly
Experience should reflect the reality of working in the acquisition environment - it should be allowed apply to multiple career fields, if appropriate to the assignment. Also, recently of experience and "life" of certification depends upon the individual and the job they are doing. Creating categorical qualifications for renewing certification would likely waste





resources, unless the individual's experiences are taken into account
Experiential qualifications are good but an addition of any tracking requirement or ancillary system would be add to the dissatisfaction of the workforce. We have enough systems to track / keep up with. Whatever is proposed, it must fit within the current framework of certification or mandatory training.
Current classes provide a sufficient foundation on which a professional can build experience, contribute, and place experiences in context. Certification alone does not equate to competence or proficiency. No amount of briefs or tasks make people better professionals though they are essential experiences.
Explain the certification process better to new AC officers and outline what courses they still need, and time needed to achieve their first level.
Fix the IDP process 1st and then worry about other systems.
Flexibility in academic degree for the technical certificates should be expanded
Focused recommendations on core plus be directed to supervisors to enable the annual CLP requirement. Too many leaders just focus on the #, and not the content.
Formal education and training a good at the theory level, but leave a huge gap at the practical application level. Should develop a library or repository of relevant small unit training material and procedures to help with training. For example, DAU does not teach anything about the Army Material Release process or actual steps it takes to field equipment. Nor does it talk about unique aspects of ACAT III or COTS procurements.
Get rid of the certification process all together - keep the DAU courses but let people take them b/c they want to learn. Revamp this broken acquisition process and reflect in new classes. Bottom line... DAU courses hinder actual work from being performed!
Get the basics and get DAU out of the equation.
Government put too much emphasis on certifications vs., formal college education and industry experience. The fact is, that a government employees that never had industry experience are always lacking the experience and find themselves relying on obsolete process to do their job.
Hands on experience is quite valuable. I would recommend a year of working experience before the initial course is taken. That would improve the understanding of policy and practices. before
Have DAU offer boutique training packages on different product development/ procurement: Instead of the UGV (system); have satellite workshops on IT system development/ procurement, medical product development, etc.
Having a portion of the CLPs that employees must achieve be directly related to the employee's certification would help maintain the skills in the workforce. I have tried to select training that meets the CLP requirement as well as help me maintain my core competencies.
Having a system where your supervisor evaluates your acquisition knowledge and experience would be good, if it would be conducted properly.
Having been part of this since the beginning, DAWIA (i.e. Acquisition Corps) is a failure in developing "acquisition professionals". Emphasis of management at all levels is now on achieving certification, without any regard for whether or not an individual is truly able to do their job. Need to focus on real just-in-time training and standards based on career field (e.g. specific courses in QA systems, Technical Data Packages, writing SOWs).



-I am PM but I work most operational day to day items. I give "credit" for sitting on a source selection board, etc... Is not fair to those that are assigned other missions. Management need to set strict roles on what is required for each position then abide by the roles.
I believe an acquisition Officer's first assignment should not be a TCM assignment because new acquisition Officers don't have to the experience to properly advice the TCM leadership
I believe it should be a requirement for senior acquisition government civilians (SES level) to have served successfully as CSL O6/GS-15 Project Managers
I believe more leadership training is needed. Program managers and other team building kind of roles should require additional exercises to improve their people skills.
I believe recertification should be part of the process. Let's face it, things change and the way forward is changing daily. The things that were important 10 years ago are no longer relevant to today's thinking or army processes.
I believe refresher courses would be very valuable and field experience at installations for experience. Nothing ever gets done or is perceived differently if you're sitting in an ivory tower all your life. I take my contracting specialists to the field to observe my programs which gives them a better appreciation and understanding of what's going on contract. So field experience is important aspect as well.
I believe that Certifications can remain indefinite providing follow up training in certification field is required. For example 10 CLPS towards actual certification each cycle. If I am certified in Project Management Level and fail to meet 10 CLPS, then I should drop to then next lower level of certification, until 10 CLPS completed. This will help keep Certified Professionals active in retaining their Certifications.
I believe that hands on experience should be a qualifier in lieu of education at the level II. If you can do the job, then you can do the job.
I believe that whenever possible there should be Joint work requirements in a formal program. Most acquisition organizations have access to multiple Services and lend themselves to Joint efforts.
I believe the classes and training is valuable for setting a foundation but there is no substitute for on the job acquisition experience in a true acquisition position. This should be required to get certified.
I believe the key is ensuring a wide variety of experiences on different programs and continuous education will contribute to a better acquisition workforce. In my short experience I have come across folks entrenched in there thinking with an unwillingness to listen to new ideas. I believe in continuous learning and seeking new experiences.
I can only assume that the purpose of this survey is to improve the process, but my gut feeling is that any recommendations to improve it would just be piled on top of the existing requirements and just be another annual reporting requirement and another box to check. Ultimately, whether someone is competent at doing his/her job has nothing to do with a certification but everything to do with that individual person. The place to improve is in the performance management area, like NSPS tried to do before it was repealed. Who knows, maybe if NSPS had been left in place for twenty years it would have been effective at getting rid of deadweight. Instead I have to try to find creative ways to accumulate an arbitrary amount of CLPs each year that mean absolutely nothing, other than a number by my name.





I do not understand how product directors are allowed to continue to lead the management of programs and not be expected to attain Level III certification?
I don't like the idea of re-certification. If someone doesn't meet their 80 CLPs then they should be de-certified. Would I have to recert in all three areas that I am certified in? This will not sit well with the community!!
I don't think a time limit on certifications is valid! People work very hard to achieve those certifications. Provided they stay in the field the certification should be indefinite. Professionals in other fields don't lose their certification. My diploma doesn't expire. Yes, the bicycle is a little tough to ride when you get back on after an absence but with a little OJT, you are back to riding well. Why should a certification expire? As a PM for a Major Platform AV Program, I've learned so much beyond what the certification taught me. I will retain that knowledge and experience for life. Why should a newly certified level III person be more qualified than me when they haven't had that experience and learned all those lessons 3 years as a PM teaches?
I feel that once a DAU cert is earned at level III in a career field it should be valid as long as the CLPs are kept current. If a person doesn't meet the CLPs, the Level III should be pulled after the two year CLP deadline and the individual should have to re-certify under the new DAU standards respectively.
I feel that the DAU course work, along with education, experience and on the job training are sufficient for maintaining a certification. I don't see any added value in another qualification tracking system or creation of another data base. As long as an employee is in an acquisition position and maintains the 80 CLPs these should be enough to maintain certifications. If someone has been out of acquisition for an extended period of time, maybe then recertification should be required.
I have been civilian acquisition professional for over 36 years. I have served in contractor, Navy, Joint (DISA) and Army acquisition and program offices. I received the Army's highest civilian award: Department of Army Exceptional Civilian Service Award, as well as two Meritorious Civilian Services Awards, two Civilian Superior Achievement awards, the David Packard Excellence in Acquisition Award, and the FED 100 recognition. I listed my awards for you as testimony of senior leadership's recognition of my effectiveness in acquisition. My first acquisition training was OJT in the Navy's first Trident submarine PM. I am a graduate of DSMC, ICAF and hold a master's degree in computer science. Only through the "luck of the draw" was I able to move between multiple program offices and I had to fight for every training opportunity. I can honestly say that while DAU formal training establishes the basic foundation, my exposure to a variety of program office experiences is what really makes the difference in my effectiveness. Formal training it must be in coordination with an established career path and not a certification level or goal. The military acquisition officer is far more effective due to their rotation of assignments in different acquisition organizations. The civilians are mostly "carried" by the officer. If you really want a great civilian acquisition corps, then do not solely rely on DAWIA certification criterion. You must at least attempt rotate the civilian between different positions in different organizations (Test and evaluation, logistics offices, procurement, requirements development, etc.) as part of their normal progression, (the military model!!!)
I have only 3 years in a PEO staff position as CPI/LSS lead. And 20+ years of industry experience. My view is that training is not an issue; culture should be the focus for



improvement. Expect more. Trust more. Create a safe environment for learning by trial and error. Value those who will think 'out of the box'; those who know the difference between guidance and directive.
I perceive that DAU is more concerned about maintaining their accreditation than the quality of the instruction/information/experience they provide to their students.
I think refresher training is good. Believe that every couple of year's individuals should be allowed to do this type of class room training, however budget realities will not allow this.
I think that the Acquisition workforce is "over trained" in bureaucratic training requirements relative to our peers on Army staff. I support competence and professional training, but it seems it always gets added on, and nothing else is ever taken away. Focus should be on nurturing expertise in high need areas, whether that be contracting, program management, etc. I also suggest that the professional service staff should be required to take more professional staff training, including basic acquisition training. The Pentagon is the business/corporate side of the DoD, so they all should be required to have similar training requirements, and their training in basic acquisition would increase the overall effectiveness of the DoD AND the Acquisition workforce.
I think that the current course selections attempt to deliver a huge amount of information to a varied workforce which is an incredibly difficult task. It might be more effective to break it into smaller chunks where people could quickly develop expertise in their area before tackling the entire elephant.
I think the present system of number of annual CLPs works well. It allows me to select which courses round out my abilities/requirements. They allow me to refresh training if it has been a number of years and the strategy/competencies may have changed.
I know where my vulnerable areas are; I should be allowed to freely address them without being distracted with "required courses" which may have no application to my current duties. If I want to progress, then obviously I need to focus on areas beyond my daily skill set. We have a mature workforce; treat them maturely, allow them to address their weaknesses and if they want to progress, then reward them for initiative and better general knowledge.
If a TDA slot in a PEO HQ is a level II or III PM certified position, then they should be given an opportunity to work in an actual program to verify their competency and confirm their interest. This should be mandated as part of preparing a level II for future level III, and especially for a level III who completes their training.
If navigating through the certification system is the individual's responsibility, then we must make it more USER friendly. If it is the supervisor's responsibility to train their subordinates and monitor them, then we must hold supervisors accountable! Certification requirements should not be a mystery and it should not take multiple websites and hours of time to navigate the requirements.
If the certification process was linked with a master's degree program, it would gain value for the entire workforce.
If there is a requirement to recertify, how would that affect Contractors? I have seen some contracts that require people to have a Dawia cert. How could they keep current and what about military retired who want to stay current for a future job?
If you are going to make changes to the system then:



1. Tie maintaining certification to the CLP training. Make it good for 4 years and require 80 hours. If you cannot get the hours in 4 years then you lose the certification.
2. Set up a system that can give credit that can be certified by a supervisor for things such as Source Selection Participation (and give so many credits based on amount of time in the Source Selection)
3. Put up some videos of conferences, speeches, etc. and make the Services (Army, Navy, AF, Marines) PKI token in to watch the videos and then give us the appropriate credit for watching the content. This allows for people to time shift the material and watch it when we can (if you really think supervisors are consistently giving people time to do training during working hours that is not the case. Only really happens when it is an OMG you are running out of time to get CLPS/finish a course/etc.)
I'm not sure courses and CLPs should be looked upon as continuing to validate an individual's certification level. I like the idea of a separate monitoring system. I also like the idea/opportunity to use tuition assistance for obtaining a Masters in Program/Project Management at Naval Post Graduate, however my sticking point is the "added" service requirement that gets tacked on after completion.
Improve access to training outside of core competency (either online or resident).
In most organizations, DAWIA certification is just a "check the box" activity. Employees do not learn from these courses the way they are taught. They are not based on real DoD systems and are textbook scenarios rather than the real world problems that arise in the workplace. There is too much focus on DAWIA certification rather than actual performance of the workforce.
In my opinion, the training opportunities to achieve success are in place but as always it boils down to people. No amount of training appears to alter the course/actions of those that consistently under achieve. In my opinion, the Government would be better served by placing all Acquisition personnel in pay for performance pay bands. This system provides the ability to award and alternatively decrement based on performance. Allowing personnel to continue to underperform will not be fixed by training.
In order for an Acquisition Professional to grow in knowledge and experience in order to be promoted, there should be more programs/training (in this case GS-13s) available. Programs such as the Acquisition Fellows Program should have a version for GS-13s. There are a number of programs that are only available to the GS-14/15 that would be of benefit to GS-13s. As stated previously, higher level Rotational assignments will give an individual greater experience for their growth Professionally and Grade wise.
In the past people received level 3 certification in SPRDE without having an engineering related degree. There should be an audit of existing certifications to verify that everyone is properly certified based on the training, experience and education requirements for level 3.
In today's budget environment, this is the first area I would cut. The on-line courses are truly a waste of my time and taxpayer dollars. I'll bet everyone simply clicks through the slides and checks the box. Instead of having quality training classes, the Army seems to just want more and more worthless classes.
In today's environment, it is increasingly difficult to keep folks on track to achieve their 10 CLPs every quarter. It was fine to have a requirement of 80 hours every other year, but



this level of monitoring is unnecessary. Folks are just looking for ways to meet the requirement rather than looking for meaningful courses.
Include more detailed IT course material and training.
Increase education on the budgetary process and how to get the attention of the upper echelons. These days it is all about the money you bring into the organization and who you know, not how well you actually do your job.
Increase opportunities for TWI and ACS. I have a MBA but would love to go back and begin an engineering based degree program. I have the aptitude, but program rules will not allow me to participate in another funded degree program.
Instead of requiring acquisition professionals to "recertify" every x# of years, I would like to see DAU offer change courses each year that I could sign up for to help me to understand changes to acquisition law, DoD 5000, and other regulations each year. Working in a Project Office mandates that I stay current in Acquisition changes. Mandating me to recertify for level III certification doesn't show anything except that I took the classes even if DAU revamps the courses each year. Do I still have to show the additional mandatory years of assignments to keep level III certification? If certification comes every 5 years, I will either study and keep current or go stale and wait for the next certification window. Do we have funding for this? Is there an opportunity to show certification levels for courses taken for a given area even without the years of assignments (I have all courses for Level 1 Test certification but shows weren't under a test TDA slot so no certification. I had took all the courses for Level II Production certification but the 24 months of Production assignments were not accepted due to the age of the assignments so I didn't get Level II certification)?
It should not be acceptable that a person graduates from the Acquisition Basic course with all coursed for Level 2 certification, but those classes expire prior to the ability to certify. You then find yourself wasting time doing DAU courses on topics/courses you have already taken.
It takes many years to become certified in the various DAWIA levels. The tone of the survey suggests that somebody has the bright idea of "decertifying" after a time away from a particular assignment. In the military, we are often sent to assignments that aren't directly relevant to our main certification (I'm in a logistics assignment as a Program Management specialization). It would be counterproductive and extremely annoying that, after a set amount of time, all the work put into certification "went away." Additionally, tracking "specialty" events like Source Selection would only encourage a "check the block" behavior amongst officers smart enough to understand that a new "career path" had been established...to the detriment of any jobs not deemed "specialty". Leave the DAWIA certification alone both in terms of content, duration, and avoid tinkering with "what works." An improvement might be had in more cross pollenization of assignments vice specialization to ensure a broader understanding of the processes involved. An officer by nature is a generalist, not a specialist (leave that to the DA civilian work force) and forcing them to have tunnel vision only in Logistics, Contracting, Test, or Program Management short changes our services on needed capabilities. Bright ideas are always welcomed...but if I read this survey right, you are headed in a dangerous direction that will degrade our acquisition capability, not strengthen it.
An acquisition field mentoring program, with qualified mentors, would benefit the Acq workforce



It's not an issue of re-certifying every few years. It's a complete waste of time and effort away from your job to worry about the hassles of certifications and re-certifying. Not saying there should not be a certification, but we should not have to do it over and over.

We don't have to re-achieve our Bachelor's or Master's degrees. Why should we re-cert. I suppose it depends on the amount of admin red tape involved in re-certifying.

I like the idea of tracking smaller items...have you been through a Milestone C, given an FRP brief, completed IOTE or LRIP. My point earlier is that with PM, a level III cert is a piece of paper. There is no way that level III in PM can prepare you for the entire life cycle.

Perhaps there should be sub-certifications for PM based on the phase of the lifecycle you are in, and focus the education on those pieces.

I've seen this surface with a test pilot program with PEO Soldier on validating competency outside of the DAU training cycles. In my opinion adding another layer of training or tracking to the statutory DAWIA certification process will not add value to the training of the force, but will add another distractor. Revamp the DAWIA certification process if it doesn't meet intent, but don't add another layer.

Just about any "continuous learning" activity counts toward the 80 points every two years. Annual requirements such as TARP and IA Level 1 awareness training should not count for Program Management CLPs. "Continuous Learning" needs to focus on updating certification areas.

Let's not create more work or unnecessary requirements. Instead, let's find a meaningful way to ensure our acquisition folks remain confident and competent. Given the current budget crisis and impending furloughs, it's hard enough to get our jobs done without having to worry about all the other 'stuff'. Continue to train, though, since it's important!!

Level III Certifications seldom reflect an employee's ability to perform. The experience a person holds needs to have greater emphasis than training - actual responsibilities and achievements not just years of experience

Like many other professional certifications, DAWIA Level certifications should be valid for life, as long as the holder continues acquiring their continuous learning points.

Management should plan for making available more developmental opportunities.

Managers continue to be a weakness. Unprofessional/less than competent managers ought to be weeded out or prevented from advancing to higher levels of authority.

Mandating or giving credit for serving in different capacities is a good idea however I think it would become mismanaged to the point of actually becoming a hindrance. Those that actually do the job would be forced to accommodate those just looking for certification.

Mandatory requirements for recertification or participation is ridiculous. I lost out on so many opportunities because I had training to do. A shadowing or mentoring program is the way to go not overloading your workforce with boring, contradictory, and generalized computer classes.

Many older employees were grandfathered into Certifications based on experience, and not having to take DAU courses. I believe they should take courses, especially since Acq has changed so much over the years. I continually look for cross-functional courses and new cert courses that I can take in my 3 Level III Fields so I can stay current. I think





recertification should occur as well, but with limited travel budgets, it may be hard to accomplish. The best training is resident, but money is tight.
Many people get certifications because they are required, and don't focus on mastering the material. also, the time in service requirement for certifications seems arbitrary and adds no value to evaluating mastery of a given subject
Matching basic branch and leadership experience and accomplishments with ACF. Entry level 51C positions do not leverage leadership of assigned officers. 51A level I and II educational requirements were provided at initial training but we are not allowed to get the experience required to complete the certification.
Mentorship needs to be stressed.
Mentorship of developing Acquisition professionals is essential to helping them apply the training and education they received their first two years. Seasoned professionals of the same career field should be working with the new Acq. Members to prepare new members for increased responsibilities and roles. Supervisors frequently supervised various career fields and do not provide mentorship in the functions of specific careers.
More emphasis needs to be placed on actual experience, rather than classroom or web training.
More emphasis on specific on the job experience.
More emphasis should be put on experience.
More interaction with, and "Lessons Learned" experiences from successful Program Managers and Acquisition Professionals.
More on-line courses.
More stability in the DAU training requirements. Contracting has been turbulent the past few FY with much change. Rightfully so, however we cannot have the workforce chasing training requirements as this creates issues in the operations of the organizations. 'Grandfathered' periods for the predecessor courses may not have been long enough.
More TWI Opportunities and also more opportunities to earn PhD.
Most DAU instruction, like most gov't instruction is mediocre. Team with the private Sector Council and attempt to emulate the best in private sector instruction and training.
Most jobs are multi-functional, the cert process should acknowledge that but it doesn't.
Most online DAU courses should be screened better and made more efficient
Most training requires the perfect world solution. That does not exist in the acquisition world. The most common answer in training is "It depends". The training should allow for real world experiences.
Much of the certification process is a "check the block" effort and does not provide much value to those individuals who only by job series are required to gain certification. Specifically, individuals who are not part of program group such as a business management office should not be required to achieve Level III certification to be qualified for their job. A hard look should be undertaken to truly break down the tasks and functions of a specific job series/mission roles prior to determining whether a certification is needed. Oftentimes, we apply a "one size fits all" mentality to the workforce and placed undue requirements that should otherwise solely be applied to a select group of people that actually perform in the role for which certification is actually required. Not only would this improve access to required training, it would also establish a pool of highly qualified



individuals that that could undertake efforts on programs without the need of a learning curve.
My current assignment, has its own certification requirements not acknowledged by DAU. The reciprocity does not go either direction, but both have valuable information. Greater reciprocity would be great to earn additional certifications.
My perception is that certification requirements are used to eliminate candidates from career promotions as opposed to certifications being used to qualify a candidate for promotion consideration. Recent (less than 5 years' experience) hires complete the certification training requirements to be Level III certified qualifying them for senior positions (i.e. Product Director) when they never functioned in a lower position such as a Deputy Product Director or Assistant Product Director.
Need to have more programs that focus on people skills development - that is the key to program success.
Need to look at the balance between DAU Training and Experience when it comes to equivalency for certification. In many cases, we are spending thousands of dollars per government employee to attend prerequisite DAU course due to restructuring (i.e. contracting field) in order to attend the next level DAU certification course due to a promotion/position change and ignore the work experience that individual has that more than covers the topics being covered in the prerequisite DAU courses.
Need to provide specific guidance to CSL PdM O-5s on use of MAJORS. Most do not know how to use us, and thus are influenced significantly by the ACQ civ workforce.
Nepotism still runs rampant in the system. I've seen it (and benefitted from it, at times, getting selected for things because of who I knew and who felt I should be pushed forward). This means that bad supervisors can keep good people out of the system and ties back into the earlier comment about academic integrity and the lack thereof.
You should read the Sept 09 Report to Congress on EVM. It identifies a lot of problems with EVM in DoD, of which training is mentioned about 15 times. The training is inadequate and given at the wrong time. It needs to teach you how to think about what is needed to comply, not how to calculate the SPI or CPI. Without an understanding of the underlying data, the metrics don't mean much. I have been looking for a venue to vent my feelings about the lack of EVM training, and you got dumped on. I was hired to mentor the three program analysts here, and I feel that I am making a difference (at least I hope I am). I have been working in EVM for over 30 years and while I enjoy what I do, I would rather find another job than see my time and tax money wasted on it not being utilized properly and fully. I realize this is a narrow focus, but my job is a narrow focus with the Acquisition process, and EVM is what I care about. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions about what I have written.
Nothing beats OJT. After that the next best thing is resident class room training. The worst method is online.
I recommend having recently changed out O5 and O6 PMs teach at DAU for 2 years following command. The dynamic of our business is so varied and changes so often you must force fresh blood with relevant exp into the school houses. It can't be seen as a punishment but a reward - promotions must follow those selected to teach.
nothing can substitute the experience of serving in specific duty position where knowledge is applied in a real program or project





Nothing compares to the OJT of an acq assignment. Experience gained from conducting a Weapon System Review, POM brief, or MS decision brief are invaluable. Having a way to depict if a DAWI member has been through a respective MS would help to assess the overall DAWI population's experience. For example, would surmise most of the DAWI expertise is on MS-C/Sustainment support vice a program in Tech Development or EMD.
Expanding the online courses was invaluable. However, making them more user "inviting" would be more enticing.
Online training is a joke and a complete waste of time. Fix it
On the job training is the critical foundation for certifications to understand how the process really works. The textbook answers you learn in training is also important, but not as critical as on the job training.
Once you have successfully navigated the labyrinth of 'text book' training to achieve the required certification level for a position, the on-the-job training gained from 'real world' program execution is more immediately valuable and pertinent/useful in the long run. The efficacy of that OJT applied training (and the fundamental DAWIA schoolhouse training behind it) is evaluated every year during annual job performance evaluation.
One time certification should continue with CLP requirement of 80 hours every two years; advance certifications should be available for all Acquisition Career fields as an option for all employees. Pay incentives should be available to employees that obtained advanced degrees and certifications.
Online DAU courses are generally not a valuable learning tool. In-person DAU courses should be the preferred method of instruction for DAWIA certification.
Online or correspondence training can't hold a match to resident training. The interaction must be there between student and teacher to ensure the minimum benchmarks are met with great success for the career ahead.
Online training is a waste of time.
On-line training is really only helpful if specific course is part of the person's job. Academic knowledge just goes in long enough to take a test and then is gone if not used. Experience is way more important, and what would be best is if a younger professional can move around in different positions and take the specific courses that are directly attributable to the work being performed - so that the 'so-what' of the course material actually registers and clicks with the work. If the list of required courses must be aligned with job responsibility before you can take the course, then it forces the experience concurrently with the training module. Resident, in-person training does a much better job of being able to really teach a concept than on-line modules. You get direct participation from other students wrt previous experiences and questions, and scenarios covered are made more real.
Op-tempo is too high to allow training at DAU
Over the years it seem that more course are being required. DAU should not be a growth industry. A hard look at how many course are required for cert. should be looked at.
Please don't set up another system outside of DAWIA that would just over complicate the issue. I recommend more time for level 2 & 3 certifications and perhaps a test to achieve those certifications.
problem is complex and believe needs to be addressed based upon age/experience of individuals....am older had lots of jobs, while in military, time as contractor for large company, time as seta contractor for small company and now back as government



employee....not much I haven't seen....think we miss important aspect of successful pm ...leadership (willing to take responsibility for mistakes, moral courage) and communications/people skills....couple these skills with good technical knowledge and competent staff and you get success
Program Management functional area personnel must have BS degrees and advanced degrees to be successful and credible!
Promotions are not considered when it comes to having an acquisition certification.
Provide additional metrics for applying OJT when justifying level increase due to experience; not simply time.
Provide more CES Advanced Course Offerings.
Provide more realistic classroom examples and/or exercises in the higher level acquisition certification training courses to allow students to better relate the course material/objectives with their own work.
Qualification is based on Education, Training and Experience, but nowhere is the QUALITY of Experience assessed. How does years = experience?! Additionally, increasing mandatory DAU training doesn't grow our Acquisition Workforce.
Qualification of the person making the certification assessment.
Quality of the experience is key. Also insuring that our most promising professionals are provided the right assignments to hone and broaden their skills while being given opportunities to take on more challenging and demanding assignments.
Rather than recertification, there should be short, summary updates to keep current with significant changes.
RECERT question - it is a lifelong learning process combined. Similar question would be - would we make parents recertify in child raising?
Recommendation with respect to CLP standard CLP, i.e., 80 hrs/2-year period. Suggest that averaging per period be instituted across a 10-year interval. For someone in my case with multiple Level III certifications, 30 years' experience, 8 assignments, a greater than average 80 CLP count per rating period, and WITH CURRENT JOB REQUIREMENTS, how much of the same course information can be retaken that would be considered beneficial, and especially in the context of completing mission requirements?? Also, I find the current SOP of requiring employees to maintain a per quarter equivalent progress to be absolutely burdensome and unnecessary. Measure an average CLP count per 2-year period and at the end of 10-year interval.
Reduce the number of two year assignments for junior officers, should be three year assignments to ensure officers are competitive in OER ratings. Two year assignments historically officers get a COM then an ACOM, does not help with CSL boards.
Refresher training should be mandated to keep informed with Acquisition changes which occur over time.
Relook MAPL Acquisition assignments and consider downgrading or eliminating assignments that provide no certification experience or growth opportunities for assistant program managers (CPTs and MAJs. In some cases these assignments teach nothing but tie down the officer for a year or longer in an assignment that a GS7 or Staff SGT could easily handle. This is a waste of resources and will become more so as the force trims down.
Relook the mandatory years of experience required for level III certification. This requirement results in stove piping folks in a single career field.



Requirements should be more stringent in order to enhance the meaning and value of certification. Also, requirements should be linked to commercial certifications to establish relevancy when working with the private sector. For example: link PM Level 3 with a PMP certification.
Review and monitor the positions being designated as acquisition. Many positions are designated as such and should not be because they do not meet the definition in any way.
Since 1998, I have repeatedly been denied DAU classes required for Level III due to mission requirements because no one else could perform my job in my absence.
Single track acquisition professionals. I have a very diverse acquisition experience. However, I believe I understand the bigger picture and influences different areas have on each other, I feel I am lacking in all areas to have a greater understanding/knowledge base.
Sometimes we can see those who get all the education requirements without the requisite experience (OJT not time in position). They can get level certifications without really knowing what they are doing. I seem to notice this most with acquisition officers who attend Naval Post Graduate School. It would seem to be a great master's degree but does not translate as well to acquisition experience as DAU resident courses do.
Stop trying to make the workforce jump through never ending administration pains chasing Quals and Certs. We don't need MORE training and ANOTHER qualification level or process. We have more than enough of that now. The workforce needs more timely and resident training that is not just click through block checks. There is tons of training already on the books. Fix that first before adding more flaming hoops to waste the workforce's time with. If you add a single more DL course, or level or cert requirement, to DAU and the Acq workforce you are WASTING time and have fully missed the issues at hand. Less, but at the right time and quality, is definitely more. Acq timing on training is totally broke and failing the workforce. Now Acq training is primarily just an administrative drill of worthless online time burning exercises with no retention value.
Supervisors need to ensure their folks are getting the right kind of experience. Admittance into DAU resident courses (like PMT 352B) needs to be better managed to give priority to folks that need it, not just folks that want it for a pay raise but aren't actually working in program management.
Supervisors should be able to waive/verify that an Acquisition Employee's relevant experience meets the time needed for certification. When bringing on a new acquisition employee, the time required to achieve a required level should be re-evaluated. I explain; I was hired with no creditable acquisition time, however; I am required to be PM Level III within 24 months. The experience requirement for level III is 4 years. How is it possible for someone to get certified in the amount of time given? Even if a 1 year extension is granted, that person is still a year short. This is where the Supervisor should be able to verify a person's experience and capabilities to perform at a given DAWIA certification level. The experience requirement is for a person to have X amount of time conducting specific work tasks, schedule, cost, and performance. An employee may be a position as an Operations Officer with no requirement to impact one of those areas, but is still required to show he/she is qualified to be certified in his/her resume. The requirements committee should get input from the O6/Colonel, GS15/NH04, and SES leaders in each Acquisition field for input on how they can best be supported through certification processes.



Teach DOTMLPFP Analysis; we complain we get poor requirements but don't know how good ones are born. Strengthen Test modules
The "process" should be able to more easily relate and provide credit for relevant work and education experience outside of DAU. Include training on negotiating techniques, strategies and corporate perspectives to better navigate program tradeoff's/compromises which would greatly assist contracting in dealing with industry.
The "requirement" to take basic level training (level 1) to attain a secondary or other certification level when already grandfathered Level 3 in another field.
The "weed and feed" method works great if it can be applied and it often is not.
The 80 hours CLP requirement is a complete waste of time. Once certified and working in an ACQ position, the need to "just take training modules to obtain the required 80 CLPs" is a complete waste of my time. I have a job to do. I can understand a person wanting to expand their career opportunities, but a mandatory 80 CLP requirement is a waste of Government time, resources and money.
The ability to become certified is valuable and required for employment; however, DAU is the only source. No other education can be substituted or participated in until the certification level required by the employee's position description is met. It would be a favorable option to have other education opportunities regardless of certification or to add to certification. DAU does not seem to keep step with the workforce. It is all about the test, vice being all about what you learn.
The accomplishment of the mandated acquisition certification training is extremely difficult if not in many cases impossible to accomplish during the course of the normal business day. Not sure how best to rectify this with a fiscally constrained environment but accomplishing the requirement during personal time leads to dissatisfaction over the mandated requirement to include the recurring 80 hour CLP requirement which too is more times than not accomplished after normal business hours.
The acquisition process is different for different warfighting areas (Ground combat systems, vehicles, interceptors, fighter aircraft (multiple types), auxiliary aircraft, ships (combatant and auxiliary), air defense systems, etc. The acquisition system should recognize these differences by stressing the key differentiators and preparing acquisition workforce members with the context and knowledge to work through those challenges.
The acquisition skill set in general, is a success story. The frustration as an acquisition professional, comes when we spend all of the time, money getting better and smarter, then when we try to implement and suggest what we're taught, it is ignored. There is a huge discrepancy in what is taught and what can be activated. There is also a gap between skill sets: Example: test professionals have little or no contracts experience, so when contracts are being written the technical expertise needs to be there, but they don't understand they may be writing requirements that far exceed the capabilities of the scope, funding, etc. The total picture is important. Private industry tends to bring a bank of lawyers to negotiations. The government brings 1 contracts person - not exactly a good or fair negotiation table. Very frustrating to somebody who is trying to do the best for the Government and attain best for the warfighter.
The AQS pilot I'm participating in appears promising, but let's not allow it to turn into *another* certification system that ends up becoming another "check the block" system like its predecessors have become (DAIWA & CES).
The basic course was too broad; someone should be prepared for their first assignment





not everything in acquisition. Follow-on training should prepare the individual for their next assignment.
The best driver for learning your job is OTJ. Acquisition branch needs to only have MAPLS at jobs that people are learning cost, schedule and performance. I have had nothing but exceptional ratings in all my assignments and have always been above my peers and the last thing that I put any effort towards is DAU classes to learn my profession.
The best thing about DAU certification is the convenience of online courses and the organization of classes at the Fort Belvoir campus.
The worst thing about DAU courses is the content. In many cases, both the case studies and materiel are dated. This includes being dated for current policy and behind the times in current government and industry best practices. It would be worth the investment to have an institution such as the George Washington University SE and Technical Management Programs or the Johns Hopkins Whiting School of Engineering review the course content and provide suggestions for improvement. Both of those organization, plus the UVA Darden School, and recognized leaders in PM and SE education.
The biggest issue I see with the certification process is that it only takes four years to become an expert in any respective acquisition field as long as you can get the training accomplished. In other words, a 26-27 year old civilian could have already achieved Level III in Program Management allowing him to fill highly critical positions with only four years of experience. For some reason, I think professional certification should take more than 4 years to achieve mastery. I would argue the exception be active duty military because we will have only been acquisition officers for 5-6 years before we become PMs.
There is also a perception to get as many certifications as you can. I just completed PMT 352B and only about half the class had ever stepped foot in a program office.
The certification process has become a make-work project for DAU and a hobby horse for a bloated Acquisition bureaucracy. DAU training is always valuable, but the idea that we need to retrain/recertify people who have achieved their Level III + training and have years of experience in the job is a waste of resources. Computer based courses are of limited value. Send people to class or don't. We are working 10 to 12 hour days keeping our heads above water in our jobs. Executing computer based training requires extraordinary effort to get the courses started, etc. Class training is much, much better. CLPs are a joke.
The certification process has changes a few years ago to one of cumulative experience. For example, I can't get certified in PM level 3 because the years of experience for each certification is added and counts against the ability to get certified in new career fields. If I do nothing for five years...yes nothing...and reapply, then the process will recognize level 3 certification. This inability to recognize that there are overlapping competencies that us as program managers must have aptitude in hinders the development wrt DAWIA certification. A more flexible certification process will add to the collective competency and not penalize overachievers like I with a monolithic one size fits all mentality.
The certification process is the broad brush approach. While this is very valuable, a more specialized approach could be more valuable. There are several agencies and organizations that have specialty requirements and do not necessarily utilize the larger DoD model.



A new and upcoming relevant process to software development should be incorporated into certification. There are GAO reports and OMB documents suggesting the government utilize a more commercial approach for software development called Agile Development.
The certification process is too process driven. Our workforce has too many people who are "book/computer" certified but doesn't have a clue as to how to motivate a team to accomplish a specific action or is actually knowledgeable of how programs through the cycle of "from the PM's desk, through the Pentagon, to the user."
The certifications are a good basis, but the real understanding of the job is the experience. I think everyone should have the familiarity of certification, but it should be a onetime even, and exposure during your career.
The classes provide a decent base, but the real learning occurs on the job.
The constant change in acquisition policy requires recent/relevant training to remain up to date.
The core competencies of Acquisition officers seem to develop more from OJT. However, the OJT is focused on the job they are currently performing (ex. Contracting Officer v. APM v. Test Officer, etc). Jobs in ASA(ALT) Pentagon seem to give more breadth of programs across the entire life-cycle since they are so focused on cost and resourcing programs. The challenge with maintaining relevant training and core competencies is to stop adding to the training and for the acquisition community to stop adding to the Acquisition Lifecycle Wall-Chart. We develop reactionary initiatives without removing any of the current bureaucratic hurdles that they are meant to overcome (WSARA, BBP 2.0, ACWS, etc). Entering a period of extreme fiscal austerity, it would behoove the acquisition community to relook the acquisition process and start from scratch.
The CSL board should not totally rely on OERs for their selections. Many officers can "game" the system or certain Senior Raters "take care" of their select officers. We need an unbiased system where OERs are just one of several factors. We should require a "Whole Person" concept for CSL. This should include written and oral exams, interview process, and medical and physical fitness tests along with evaluations from peers.
The current 24 month deadline should be changed to 36 months because of mission requirements.
The current process requires a particular type of college degree for certain certifications. Specifically, Test and Evaluation requires a technical degree. Military Officers who served as outstanding test officer become ineligible for the same position they served in the day they retired, even though they have superior practical experience compared to some of their civilian counterparts. The same applies to System engineering certifications. Practical experience should be given more weight and be allowed to account for the lack of a technical degree.
The current system has created what I call "Paper Tigers". Civilians with reams of certifications but no actual work experience or real capabilities to get the job done. They usually hide out on staff in Project Offices or PEOs and serve no role other than passing through actions to others to do the actual work. More emphasis should be placed on job experience with tangible accomplishments.
The DAU requirements in place to are adequate; we need TRUE leadership support and mentorship to leverage the wealth of information and knowledge at DAU and on-line



modules
The DAU resident courses were more effective than the online courses.
The efforts to add additional requirements outside of the basic course for level I is preventing personnel from obtaining certifications. It would appear the basic course is not sufficient to get personnel the minimum certification. If the Acquisition community desires personnel to spend additional month's training after the basic course, perhaps we should improve the basic course to allow it to be the foundation from which a person could obtain Level I within a year of actual hands on work. If personnel switch career fields, they are at a disadvantage. Why did I go to the Intermediate Contracting Course, and get an MBA if I am not able to get at least Level I certification. It frustrates some of us.
The MAPL should be cross walked with education requirements. The positions should drive the education requirements not a cookie cutter course load for certifications. Sort of like a critical task list...
The most frustrating aspect is being coded in a position that does not actually deal with any acquisitions.
The over focus on just PM and contracting has led to a decrease in quality testers and other competencies.
The PMT 352B course that I took was excellent. The other course were not quite as good. Again, training, working in a private company that is not a government contractor would be very beneficial. It could also cause some frustration in that the government is really hamstrung with all of the regulations and processes that is tries to force on the government employees.
The process works for me. To recertify wouldn't be sufficient. The day to day mission provides enough training.
The purpose of the Continuous Learning Point policy has been lost. The drill is to get your CLPs to meet the requirement. It would be more beneficial to have classes to take for refresher purposes rather than having all the other ways to earn the CLPs. The way organizations are pursuing CLPs is taking up valuable time without any ROI. One more point, the supervisors need to be informed that they are responsible for making the time available for their employees to take their mandated DAU courses. Instead, they are highly, strongly, clearly encouraging taking the classes at home on the employees' own time. They are made to feel guilty if they don't do the courses at home. This is not right.
The real question is what is lacking or wrong in the ACQ workforce? How do you fix it? I don't think there are issues with Level III folks, why build more requirements for them to maintain? Why not leverage the PMI model or just use PMI? It would save DoD millions, reduce redundancy, ...
The requirement appears to be superficial for some who are training but never have the opportunity to actively work on programs that are in active testing activities. One gains a lot of experience when they are overseeing Development Test.
The requirement to actually be assigned to a specific organization for a certain amount of time doesn't make sense. As an example, as an APM and PM, I am responsible for the various contracts, but cannot claim contracting certification.
The survey seems to be missing the OJT value. Although asked in the survey, this survey seems to support a DAU self-licking ice cream cone theme. DAU is ok; not great. A lot of money is poured into making DAU what it is. You can't buy what it needs. On the job experience is far more superior and relevant. Mentoring and real world experience is the





way to go.
The training is a rite of passage. That's it. The real knowledge comes from the on the job training.
There are too many existing systems already out there that are tracking our progress.
There is a certification to qualification (C2Q) initiative being discussed in DoD which leaves the impression that certification does not equal qualification. I think we need to be careful with strategic messaging. I believe the experience tenet of certification has never been defined accurately with an amount of time in an acquisition position currently being the discriminator. We really need to put some "teeth" into experience and have the achievement of specific acquisition career field competency skill sets as the factor for experience rather than have a completely separate certification and qualification process. They should be one in the same.
There is too many disparate systems and requirements (DAIWA, CES, TED, CAPMIS, CHRTS, etc....) that are confusing and redundant. There are too many caveats on what is considered leadership training vs. mandatory training. If it's mandatory no CLPs are allowed!!! That is BS! Keep it simple.
There needs to be more emphasis on broadening of experiences outside one's core specialty as you advance in grade. We have too few opportunities to come together as senior leaders and discuss lessons learned in a constructive environment. A 401 lite for senior leaders would be well worth the effort. DAU, at least within the Log area, needs to revamp its instructor qualifications. Most of the instructors I've had have little to no experience in the field and are just mimicking back regs and policy. I learned more useful info at NPS from 93-95 than in my subsequent 18 years of taking DAU courses and getting CLPs.
They change the standards so often, that it is often difficult to reach level II and III while also performing job. Once you start working towards a level of certification those standards should apply. Also since it takes so long to get level III course such as 352B these should be offered online
Think DAU training gives you a basic understanding but experience and mentoring is where you really learn your trade.
Tie acquisition experience and certification to salary - "Pay for Performance"
To date I've been very disappointed with DAU courses and their lack of focus on other than ACAT I programmatics. I'm reluctant to say they were a complete waste of time since many individuals rely on DAU as their sole-source for acquisition experience; however, I'd rather see more emphasis on job performance (OJT) than academic performance from DAU. For CLPs I think DAU courses are fine, but I'm not convinced that completing a requisite number of DAU courses makes someone qualified to become a Program Manager/Logistician/Technical Expert...experience and job performance does.
Too many requirements, too much "mandatory" training/experience, too much waste. Professionals won't be produced, we are people and development is key. Avoid multiple "certification" like requirements.
Too many training requirements - need to look at streamlining and cutting back on the multitude of training.
Too much acquisition training. DAU appears to be trying to grow an empire and require more and more training. Very inflexible with granting credit for prior training, for example, had been SPRDE Level III for years, when I went to get PMT certification, had to retake



System Engineering classes, complete waste of time. Employees have too much mandatory training.
Too much DAU training is focused on managing OSD and not on managing programs.
Too much emphasis on managing ACAT1 programs. Many instructors only seem to have ACAT 1 experience (but really only managed a small part of the overall program) and have a difficult time relating to a student who has complete responsibility for an ACAT III program.
PMT 401 should focus less on case studies and more on actual skills, particularly skills my industry counterparts learn. I am far behind them in my ability to manage a program. I am much better in my ability to manage OSD- but that does not really matter.
Tracking of individual acquisition tasks could ensure a broader acquisition experience, but it is doubtful that supervisors will have the time or resources to administer.
Train leadership and the difference between leadership and management
Training is not the answer. Providing employees with clearly defined and measurable performance metrics then holding them accountable to meeting the minimum requirements is the answer. Training should be a tool to allow motivated employees to improve and prepare for future assignments.
Training MUST be as simple and straight forward as possible. Current DAU courses rather than provide instruction are unnecessarily confusing almost as if someone thinks that by making them confusing it provides a perception DAU is actually training people. DAU instructions do not support work being performed.
Training needs to go beyond the Acquisition Workforce to the Requirers. Poorly written requirements are one of the biggest problems faced by the Acquisition community. The rest of DOD needs to be educated to what is and is not the role and responsibility of the Acquisition community. We spend WAY TOO much time, arguing over who should be responsible for what, when the rules are clear, but the community is ignorant or unsure of what is intended.
Trying to squeeze in certification while doing your day job is not a good way to do business. Change that dynamic (imposed, in part, by authorizing the hiring of an individual who is not already certified and requiring certification within 18 months). Increase the time or hire pre-qualified personnel.
TWI is key. It can be very beneficial to our workforce's experience.
We already have a separate system to track other training completed outside of DAWIA--the IDP. The problem is that classroom learning does not equate, always, to good performance. There must be relevant, challenging OJT with mentorship, focusing on critical thinking. Too many acquisition professionals look for cookie-cutter solutions to get through the next gate, without concentrating on what must be done to ensure success to all parties.
We do not need more oversight!!
We do need senior leaders that are not afraid of making the right decision for the Warfighter at the O6 level. Seems everyone is hesitant to make a decision without going to a GOSC.
We need less of short, computer based training modules and more of long, residence



courses that encourage student-to-student and student-to-instructor interactions that truly promote learning. CBTs are a humongous waste of time!!!
We only address one specific way of doing business geared towards ACAT programs. There are many other non-program of records that require the workforce to be DAWIA certified but we never address them in any of the training.
We, as PM's, be allowed to count our time toward PM, CON and Test time as we deal extensively in all three areas. However, currently we are mandated to choose one.
We're being tracked and graded on having our workforce 100% certified within 24 months IAW their positions without any regard to whether they are actually qualified to do the job. Training and 4 years of work experience do not equate to a functioning Level III workforce.
When there is a back log for a course that is a prerequisite to other courses, allow waivers so that people will not get behind.
When we receive someone from outside government, are we giving enough credit for that experience? Many times we do not and that hurts us and will make it more difficult to recruit quality over time.
While a person can complete all of the training sufficiently, it CANNOT replace the valuable lessons learned from hands on experience.
While a qualification monitoring system separate from the DAWIA certification process to track an individual's actual acquisition experiences would be beneficial, it is not always possible for active duty service members to get the assignments necessary to gain the relevant experience.
While the opportunity for training and skills advancement is always identified as a motivator, the DAU's training methods and content are only ever regarded as negatives by the DOD knowledge workers I have known. The distance-delivered content is especially disliked. Everyone I know clicks through all online content as quickly as possible to get to the test. We see it as an embodiment of bureaucracy. The PMI does a better job at communicating standards and skill sets.
While training is supposed to be the law of the land the reality is that each program uses their own methodology in applying the DFAR and DOD 5000. The amount of "Help" that is provided by adding additional training and oversight to program offices has the opposite effect on the effectiveness of an organization. It does little except to increase the time and costs required to implement programs.
Why do we crown someone "Level III" after 4 years, particularly military, and then be surprised our acquisition system is so flawed?
Why not give acquisition professionals mandatory and random foundational knowledge checks/surveys/tests relative to their career field and assignment to gauge their actual knowledge? This would hold folks more accountable by providing feedback on their career track knowledge base and can also be used a metric by Leadership to gauge how well the DAU training, Education, Experience is working.
With regard to acquisition experience - the certification process does not take into account the fact that on larger programs, an acquisition professional may only experience a small portion of the acquisition life cycle. This is limiting, especially if you join a program AFTER major milestones have been met.
-With respect to how long DAWIA certification should last--job experience in a relevant field should keep certification alive indefinitely, but if serving away from a field for a long period of time, and educational recertification may be justified.



-With respect to tracking experience more closely: to the extent that this system motivates workers to want to seek certain types of experiences this could be good (many would like to avoid a source selection due to the long hours, limited flexibility with time and leave, etc.). However, these experiences show up on resumes and in interviews, so having a tracking system would most likely result in more paperwork but would not actually change anyone's behavior.

With sequestration and furloughs, CLP requirements should be suspended.

Would like to see some integration of major industrial partners "best practices", training requirements, etc. Often times, they are light years ahead on their execution and understanding. Would be interesting to participate in non-TWI "training" courses.

Your assumption is the current workforce is not qualified to do its job. On what data is this based on? Could it be the workforce already has too many requirements? Have you ever studied the cost of DAWIA vs. the saving?

### **Science and Technology Manager**

In my experience, I have not been provided the opportunity to further my AAC knowledge with a resident course. I have always been in positions that are "too busy" to allow me to further my professional credentials. I have not had a supervisor that would promote further coursework while "on the clock". My peers that have made opportunities are the folks that spend considerable less time bettering the organization and mission. I have worked with too many people that are committed to their resume while uncommitted to their current job.

### **System Planning, Research, Development, and Engineering—Program Systems Engineering**

As an Army Acquisition Functional Reviewer for the SPRDE "W" "S" and "I" Career Fields who is certified as DAWIA Level 3 in multiple ACFs and an Acquisition "Grey Beard" who has worked numerous Army and Joint Techbase and ACAT I/II Program of Record activities, I strongly disagree with the recent decision to eliminate Program Systems Engineering (i.e. SPRDE "W") as an approved Acquisition Career Field. There is a significant difference between the basic Techbase SPRDE "S" Level 3 certified skillsets found across the Techbase cadre of S&Es and the enabling critical PEO/PM SPRDE "W" Level 3 Program Systems Engineering certified skillsets required to support ACAT I/II Programs of Record as a Chief Systems Engineer. There should also be some certification credit from DAWIA Level 3 Program Management "A" Certification and ability to apply this training and experience toward PMP certification (i.e. Program Management Professional).

Continue to evolve training as best practices develop and change

Get rid of experience requirement for level 1 certifications.



Level II & III certifications should be more about training and less about time served in disparate acquisition positions.
Serving in a program management office is still the most valuable and intensive acquisition experience and in my view, produces more effective acquisition leaders than those who serve predominantly in functional proponent offices.
Like high school and college, while many can pass the classes, very few really achieve a level of understanding of what they have learned to be able to effectively implement it and apply a critical reasoning process to their everyday work. Demonstrated past performance will be a better indicator of future performance than will be a simple list of classes taken.
Make sure your teachers know their subject. Establish a hands on training program for offices that have been doing QRC so long they forgotten how to do real system engineering. Establish guidelines for how many acquisition professionals are allowed to be non-engineers. Under QRCs, too many retired non-acquisition soldiers were hired into acquisition/Engineering jobs. I've worked on only ACAT 1 Projects for 30 years and I have never been in such a dysfunctional office as I am now.
Most DAU courses are focused on weapons systems. I have worked with business information systems for most of my career and must always assess the training material for its relevance and applicability to business information systems. A training track that is more focused on business information systems would be an improvement
Oversight on jobs that are outside of the traditional acquisition corps umbrella.
Technical competence and credentials need to be a requirement for and need to match duty assignments. For example, the leader of a technical team should have engineering or hard science credentials.
There is no standard for what constitutes acceptable experience. Identifying skills that must be demonstrated would have more value than merely spending time in a coded position
1) The requirement for training for the sake of checking a box wasteful. 2) I do not like to travel just for training. I travel too much already for work assignments. 3) I like the DAU on line modules as they can be taken when I need the required refresher insight into a specific - but again completing training just to reach 80 points does not seem like a wise investment. There have been times when I completed 150 CLPs out of necessity to sharpen knowledge in specific subject areas to perform my job.
Allow management to decide if the worker is meeting the requirement of the job.
Agencies should be better prepared to orient new employees to the processes and the requirements of the acquisition certification process.
As long as all areas of acquisition experience are considered, it should work; However, it should not be overly weighted towards higher headquarters assignments or PM assignments or field assignments; but rather a balanced approach.
Being in job position and not being DAWIA certified in that position or unable to become certified, etc., after the probationary period ends shall be cause for immediate removal from that job position.
Cross certification in other areas such as logistics, PM, etc., should be made available locally. It is essential to have the ability to cross train to understand the other disciplines in higher level courses 300+, for experienced personnel to enable breath in skills and





experience. Locally pmt352B, is dead locked by priority 1 candidates, as are other similar courses. It is essential to be able to be in person to gain knowledge from those with the primary certification to gain their knowledge and experiences, something not achievable online.
DAU certification is like a college degree, nobody would ever expect to have to go back to school to re-validate their degree so I would not expect anyone to have to re-validate their certification. Having someone take a refresher course, mandatory or not would be valuable, but not for re-certification.
DAU monopoly of training and certification is a conflict of interest and impacts timely completion of required training
DAWIA is a paper drill and does not have the credibility for the civilian force. It serves only the military. Any other program to try to train acquisition professionals is a waste of money. As long as the military are benefiting from acquisition experience by being product/program managers instead of civilian the likelihood of an acquisition professional is low.
From a technical perspective, emphasis should be more on what is relevant in industry today; particularly in such a dynamic environment as IT. DAU doesn't come close to providing that kind of relevant training to the IT workforce. Moreover the resident courses are duplicative of the online courses that serve as pre-requisites. The entire process is incredibly repetitive and not intellectually challenging. IT workforce would be better off taking industry courses to learn about what is new and relevant in IT.
Have senior school for acquisition fields. Something like a Military Service Staff College geared more toward the actual career field.
Huge waste of taxpayer dollars. Teaches to the lowest common denominator and does not look at an individual continuous 'Kaizan' model (continuous improvement). Where are the metrics on the effectiveness of DAU classes?
Bottom line, there should be more required OJT, maybe across different functional areas as well as different phases of acquisition. This could be achieved through rotational or developmental assignments. Also a comprehensive exam for final certification, or perhaps a basic and master certification levels. There should be some way to weed out personnel that lack capabilities. Particularly at the higher levels, like Level III.
It doesn't allow for future growth in a career field; I have maxed out in two areas - to continue with coursework would require a change in careers.
It seems that although everyone is taking courses and getting certified they are not actually practicing what's taught in the classes or what's required for proper acquisition. People are more focused on getting over with the training and CLPs as an admin requirement than trying to actually learn to improve job performance and do things correctly.
More like on the job training with relevant program examples and past PM's giving help.
Need an acquisition "career coach" to customize requirements. Need to customize recertification requirements based on the contracts being administered and available funding/time. Sequestration/furloughs should be factored into time required for certification/recertification.
Need DAU courses that outline current CDRT / Rapid Acquisition / COTS as "program of record" Army acquisition philosophy.
Need for training that is DIRECTLY related to my job assignment.



Re-certification would be a waste of time for people continuously working in acquisition. This might only be an option for people who have a break in service or who transfer out of acquisition and back for over 5 years.
Recommend DAU course deadline should be extended to 90 days instead of 60 day due to the fact, some people have frequent job travel TDY and could use the extra time to complete the course.
Stop subdividing the core competencies. Keep Systems Engineering as one entity. Keep Program management as one entity. Candidates have difficulty choosing which career choice to make in one area with a multitude to choose from.
Supervisors should be more highly encouraged to promote DAU training and to provide guidance to acquisition employees. Employees who successfully complete DAU training should be rewarded with more challenging work. Also, making mentor opportunities (both mentoring and being mentored) would help cross-pollinate the entire acquisition workforce.
The best teacher is experience! If you are successful in performing the duties of acquisition (whatever they may be) that is the key. Have your supervisor rate you on your performance (as they already do for CCAS) have that count as part of your acquisition certification process or validation.
There are a small number of professionals who are able to achieve DAWIA certification but are low performers in actual acquisitions. They seem to be stuck. Management seems to expend too much effort to bring them to an acceptable level of performance.
These courses are not sufficient to give the level of expertise required to work on a real world program. It takes years of hands on experience, not a 2-3 week course.
Too often I think that the certifications are overlooked for promotions and organizations actually look at past experience. I don't think that any commercial companies even consider the certifications especially companies that are not related to the defense industry.
Training Funding should NOT be subject to Sequestration Actions.
Until the training is followed by a mentor system that actually assigns tasks to put the training into action, the training will only be training. And the confidence that has been mentioned before will not likely be gained.
While there are capable acquisitions persons, who can and should be assigned to positions of increasing responsibility, there aren't that many positions available, or opportunities to move to them. Imposing currency of experiences and positions may impede those who have the capability, but not the opportunity.

## Test and Evaluation

Before adding any additional requirements, ensure the schoolhouse capacity exists to allow the workforce to actually obtain a quota and attend the training. Don't add additional degree requirements with no grandfather clause--the STEM Degree for T&E invalidated degree work for some of the workforce into which over 3 years of effort was invested.
Certification requires the re-submission of documents (ORB/ERB, OER/NCOER) for each certification request; the certifications should build off the previous certification and therefore not require the resubmission of an ORB/ERB, etc.
I feel that we have embraced an inherent weakness by depending on credentialing instead





<p>of a person's ability to do the job, i.e. Google would be a good model to emulate. Also for people with no military experience to given them some kind of training to understand how the military works so they will understand missions and how the equipment they work on will fulfill the mission. Certification in one field many times increases your ignorance in other fields. For acquisition professionals they should be level III in Requirement, (not yet a field), logistics, cost estimating, test and evaluation, etc. Having a wide range of experience helps people get the big picture of what we are trying to accomplish.</p>
<p>I think the value in requiring recertification can be obtained by providing short courses that are relevant to the certification, such as a short course on Design of Experiments for a tester, or something like that. These short courses could add to the CLPs, and would therefore not necessarily be an additional burden to the acquisition member. I do not think that things such as routine meetings, security training, etc. should count toward CLPs. I see the value in CLPs but would hate the additional burden of having to recertify every XXX number of years. I think short courses could be designed to help keep me current even after I've been certified for 15 years.</p>
<p>It is difficult to get required certification training for a concentration that is not your primary function. For Example, trying to get IT classes when you are a PM.</p>
<p>Keeping the DAU on-line courses current, example: selected an Information Assurance module last year, it was still using DITSCAP which has been outdated for at least 5 years. If course is outdated pull off-line till updated!</p>
<p>More training with industry would be valuable, as would mandatory ACS. The value of this training should be presented to the promotion board, so it is not seen as wasted time.</p>
<p>online modules are not as effective as other forms of training</p>
<p>Personnel with sufficient knowledge can succeed without experience. Personnel can have significant experience without success or gaining knowledge. In fact, many with significant experience are counterproductive as they have repeated unsuccessful experiences. What the system desperately needs is a mechanism for encouraging those who are counterproductive to find another career field. Not everyone who goes into the acquisition workforce training channel should remain in the acquisition workforce. Sheer quantity of training and experience is a terrible measure of success. Also, simply repeating previous training is not continuous learning. Continuous learning is a process of building on prior learning. Recertification should be built around testing of the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in the acquisition field. Numbers of years of experience are a completely useless measure if those years do not result in the necessary knowledge and skills to succeed. Far too many senior personnel in the acquisition community are simply incompetent. They are in the positions they hold only because the system rewards longevity (stagnation).</p>
<p>The acquisition certification system currently requires a re-verification of skill sets (i.e. a re-submission of OER/NCOER) each time a new certification level is applied for; tracking should build on previous application submissions and job titles, not re-submission of OER/NCOERs that have to be up-loaded each time.</p>
<p>The biggest drawback/pitfall is that it is very possible to satisfy certification requirements and not truly learn the subject matter.</p>
<p>While I agree with some sort of monitoring and/or current (updated) instruction on current levels held, I don't feel that certification levels should be removed / withdrawn from an individual due to the fact that they may not be in a slot that supports their certification level</p>



or area. If an individual with a level III in PM works for “X” amount of time in T&E (for which they are also certified), their PM level III should not be removed / withdrawn from them solely due to the length of time away from a PM shop. I do applaud and support periodic refresher / recertification course work as a way to maintain a current certified knowledge base throughout the workforce.



THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK





ACQUISITION RESEARCH PROGRAM  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS & PUBLIC POLICY  
NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL  
555 DYER ROAD, INGERSOLL HALL  
MONTEREY, CA 93943

[www.acquisitionresearch.net](http://www.acquisitionresearch.net)